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AUTHOR Kimeldorf, Martin
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ABSTRACT

The guide to dramatic activities is appropriate for use with handicapped children and adults as well as the non-handicapped. The introduction notes the value the dramatic arts can have for students, suggests that special education often focuses primarily on the student's inabilities rather than abilities, and notes that career and job-seeking skills can be learned through drama. Three major program steps are included. The section on Program Step 1, "Theatre Games," offers teachers guidance for leading specific group games, body warm-ups, activities to get in touch with one's senses, and games with partners. The next program step is "Teaching Dramatic Structure through Short Skits" with suggestions for choosing a skit script, introducing the script, directing a short script, teaching character and plot analysis, preparing for performance jitters, and directing longer multiple scene scripts. The final program step is "Improvisation." This step covers the dramatic structure used in improvisations, suggested non-verbal and verbal improvisation exercises, inventing improvisations, and using improvisation to develop social skills for daily living. Two final sections cover playwriting and script development and program planning tips. Appendices contain brief essays by teachers using the program, a student essay, and a sample improvised script on the subject of job finding. (DB)

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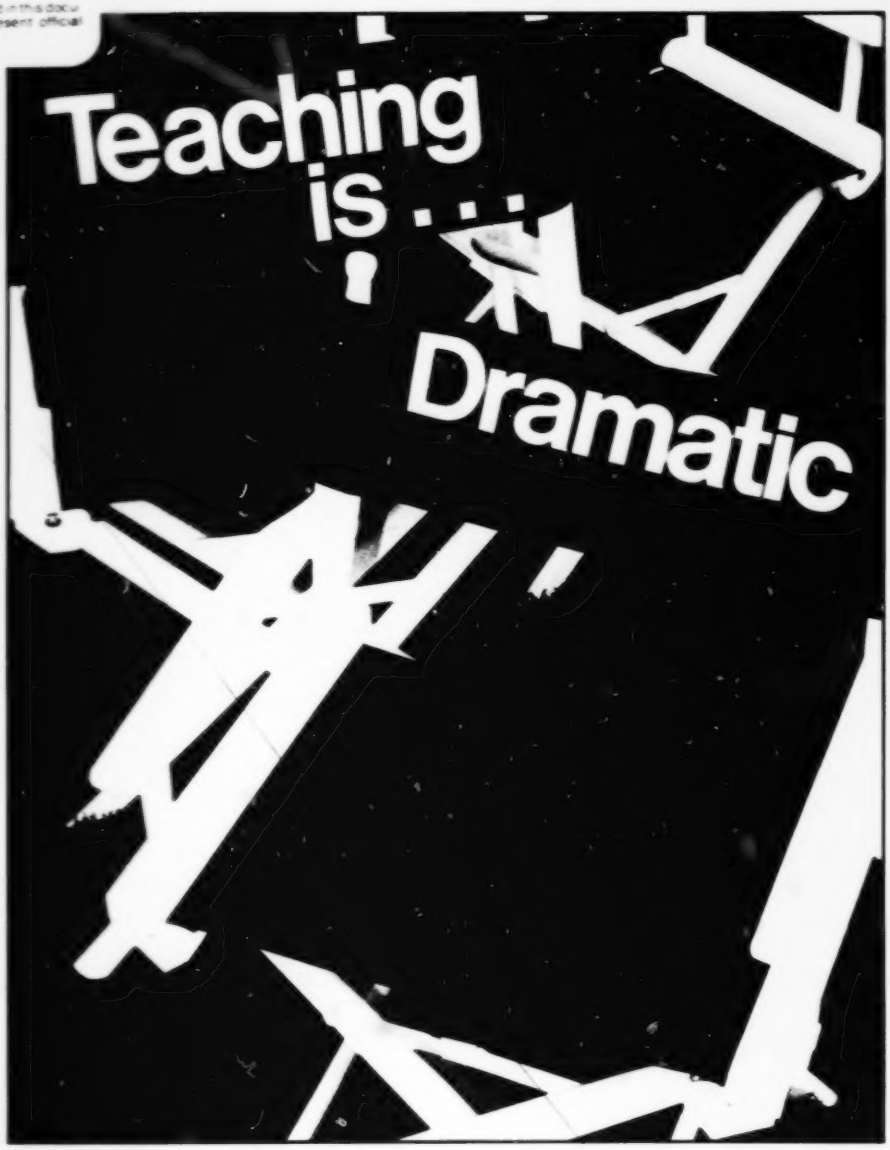

by MARTIN KIMELDORF

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EC 190 299

TEACHING IS DRAMATIC

RECREATIONAL DRAMA
AND GROUP ACTIVITIES
FOR EDUCATORS, TRAINERS, AND FACILITATORS

Martin Kimeldorf

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For My Students

"Education Is the Kindling of A Flame,
Not the filling of a vessel"
(Socrates)

For My Judith

When my song turns to ashes on my tongue
And I look in the mirror and see I'm no longer young,
Then I got to start the job of separating false from true
And then I know I need the love of you...
(From a ballad by Pete Seeger)

OTHER BOOKS BY MARTIN KIMELDORF

OPEN AUDITIONS Methods and Scripts for Theatre By/With/For Handicapped Individuals.
With Rod Lathim, foreward by Micheal Douglas. Ednick Communications Inc. PO Box 3612, Portland, Oregon 97802.1982.

SPECIAL NEEDS IN TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION. (Teacher Resource Guide).
Davis Publications. Printer's Building, Worcester, MA 01608. 1984.

JOB SEARCH EDUCATION. (Workbook and Program Guide).
Educational Design Inc. 47 West 13, NYC,NY 10011. 1985

WORKSHOP DESIGN PRINCIPLES. (Workbook).
(Available only from author)

AWARD WINNING PLAYSCRIPTS.....
About the unemployed, handicapped, and science fiction. (Available from the author):
HELP WANTED ....TAKE A CARD, ANY CARD....THE FUTURESIGN REVUE

DEDICATION: To Dramatic Teachers and Trainers

WHILE YOU CAN BREAK DOWN TEACHING INTO SOUND STEPS AND PROCEDURES, QUITE OFTEN THE SUM DOES NOT EQUAL THE TOTAL OF THE PARTS. CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND METHODS CAN EVOLVE OUT OF INTUITION, PRACTICE AND MENTORING.

GOOD TEACHING IS FUNDAMENTALLY AN ART...SERVED BY SCIENCE AND STUDY....BUT NOT A SLAVE TO IT.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE KIND OF TEACHER WHO REALIZES THAT GOOD ARTISTS ARE TEACHERS AND GOOD TEACHERS ARE ARTISTIC. THESE TEACHERS HAVE FOUND THAT INTUITION AND PRACTICE CAN SERVE AS A GUIDE EQUAL IN IMPORTANCE TO RESEARCH AND STUDY.

THEY FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT ART IS OF EQUAL VALUE TO MATH OR READING... IN A WORLD WHERE COMPUTERS REMEMBER MORE AND CALCULATE FASTER...

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU FOUND THIS BOOK USEFUL, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO FUTURE EDITIONS. I AM ALWAYS INTERESTED IN MY READERS' SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS OR CHANGES. WRITE TO ME IN CARE OF THE PUBLISHER.

SPECIAL THANKS

TO MARIAN BARBER, KATHY CAREY, AND SALLY DAHL, WHO NOT ONLY PROOFED THE FIRST EDITION BUT GAVE IT A TRIAL-BY-CLASSROOM TEST. THEIR SUGGESTIONS, ENCOURAGEMENTS, AND INSIGHTS WERE ESPECIALLY HELPFULL. IN ADDITION, I WISH TO THANK JEAN EDWARDS AND SUE WAPNICK WHO HAVE SUPPORTED MY ENDEAVORS TO BRING DRAMA TO THE CLASSROOM AND COMMUNITY....SUPPORTING ME AS A FRIEND, AND AS A PUBLISHER...

• Martin Kimeldorf ...1985.

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INTRODUCTION

GOOD TEACHING IS ARTISTIC

Good teaching is a tough and demanding job. This challenge is compounded by the fact that every so often we dogmatically gravitate towards one trend or another. This reduces variety to the current fad. I have seen where behavioral science has dominated special education.....reducing some classrooms to clinical bores.

We have witnessed how administrators have mimicked business processes with techniques like "time management" (telling teachers that discussion of an antecdote is "off task"). Yet many have forgotten that the true entrepreneur is a creative and gifted person. One is reminded of a passage from *What They Don't Teach You At Harvard Business School* by Mark McCormack who writes:

> ...Decision making is more an intuitive process than an analytical one, and no number of of market studies, focus groups, or research reports is going to change that fact. The danger is that the more data people have to chew upon, the more lilkely they are to underestimate the importance of intuition....

Today Mr. McCormack runs an interantional advertising and related consulting business.

The competent teacher, trainer, or administrator relies on several tools. My ultimate belief is that good learning and teaching should, by its nature, be humanizing. Unfortunately, I cannot think of how you measure this wholistic, intuitive process.

In this text I am sharing with you techniques that can be applied to a variety of skills, and a variety of learners. These skills stress improvisation, group processes, and persistence. Some are called Theatre Games, Skits, Creative Dramatics and together these activities compose Recreational Drama.

However, it should be pointed out that many people have used these types of activities in classes ranging from Anger Management to Job Seeking. Most of these activities do <u>not</u> require formal dramatic training before you can use them in your program. Perhaps the simple fact that recreational drama is fun is important in a world where teaching is a tough job.

Most educators and trainers hope that their students and clients will learn skills which enable them to survive in the world independently . The famous "bottom line" after leaving school is entry into the labor market. This task is increasing in complexity as more people apply for fewer jobs. It includes survival in the world of work, leisure, and family/community life.

The hallmark of an effective job search is persistence, organization, and good interview skills. Rehearsing and re-rehearsing a dramatic presentation can help teach persistence or endurance. Job interview skills are built out of improvisational talents. Many job search training programs rely on role playing , videotaping, and use of scripts for interview training. Dramatic techniques can contribute to the overall challenge of job search training.

Besides helping people to expand their opportunities for employment, drama can also expand leisure time options. Many people will face long periods of unemployment. As a result they have many hours to fill each day. Still larger numbers are finding their jobs to be one of deadly routine. These people look to hours outside of work for their fulfillment. Both will benefit from learning new skills for their "leisure" hours

Hopefully our schools will realize that the 4th "R" is just as *basic* or essential as the "3 R's". That 4th R is aRt. Art should not have to be continuously justified as serving other ends like vocational training, though I hope it is obvious that Art can contribute to instruction in many diverse areas.

At one time in our primitive history, Art and Work were not separate entitites. For example, implements of hunting and gathering were traditionally decorated.As the theme of "tribal integration" periodically re-appears in the 20th Century we begin to further appreciate what one author described as our "ancient and inherent necessity of art".

In the appendices there will appear antecdotal statements from teachers and students supporting the need for or usefulness of Recreational Drama activities. I prefer this evidence of the endless array of government/university studies. Let your intuition as well as your heart be your guide.

As one person once wrote, "art is not a product of great intelligence, but of great feeling .....which we are all capable of".

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR ?

I began teaching these drama exercises in special education classes following a successful production of my play about the handicapped. Later, I found that these exercises could be used equally successful with severly handicapped adults living in group homes as well as street-wise delinquent youth who were incarcerated. Finally, I applied it to my job search program and seminars and found that teachers and many other adults benefited from these exercises.

The core revolves around developing a sense of imagination, space and trust using theatre games. Scripts are then used on various topics. Finally, improvisation and script writing is attempted.

These general skills can be used in a variety of areas. One might want to use the Theatre Games as warm up activities. If you like to use role playing in your instruction,you will find that the quality of the role play performance is enhanced by some of these methods. I have seen these techniques used in programs for written language, values formation, career education, social/communications (social skills training), social-sexual education, as well as English and drama classes. We also find these acitivities useful in recreation and residential programs.[1]

[1]Those with a serious theatre performance intent might be interested in looking at *Open Auditions* .It contains methods and scripts for integrating handicapped and non-handicapped people in staged productions.

SPECIAL NOTE TO SPECIAL EDUCATORS-- TOO MANY "R'S??

What happens if you have a learning/intellectual handicap? We give you 6-12 years of intensive remediation. That means the focus of our intense tutorial is daily rivetted to your inability...not your strengths.

As Benard Haldane once wrote, "we mistakenly think we learn from our mistakes" (or errors and limits). In fact, we release greater human potential with a more balanced approach. We need to focus upon the total personality, with greater emphasis on those things we do well. After all, an employer hires you for your strengths....not your handicaps.

We need a more balanced approach towards human development, one that recognizes growth in affective as well as cognitive areas. Suffice it to say, that everyone enjoys a little of the spotlight.

THERAPEUTIC BY-PRODUCTS

The recreational drama program is not psycho-drama or drama-therapy. However, several therapeutic outcomes are inevitable. You will soon see change and growth that was previously unattainable with your students or clients. Some people have begun programs teaching specific pro-social (as opposed to anti-social) skills using structured role playing. These programs are called "social skills training." Other programs deal with positive image building. A sampling of some of the literature reveals the following:

> Disruptive students who used drama and music improvisation to resolve problems have improved their behavior and academic achievement [for junior high school]....The least effective strategy to improve behavior and academic performance was instruction....This finding might indicate that these children do not respond well to instruction, no matter who provides it, and the strategies uniquely related to drama workshops are, in fact, the most effective with high risk youth. [Based on a study of several hundred disruptive junior high school students in the Conflict Through Resolution Through Drama Project; cited in The Articulator, May 1982. National Committee Arts for the Handicapped, Washington, D.C.]

When working with incarcerated high school students we found that they seemed to appreciate the opportunity of personal exploration. Several students stated that they enjoyed trying out roles that might be ridiculed by their peers "out on the open campus." The games provided a safe refuge for exploration and growth. Likewise, several major detention centers and institutions in the state of Washington employ social skills training. A sample appears in this text, at the end of Program Step 3: Improvisation.

Two researchers in the summer of 1982, Susan Pearson and Elizabeth DeQuine from the University of Washington, worked with a group of 10 delinquent youth where videotapes were made around dramatization of role-play conflicts found in work related situations. Their method was similar in many ways to social skills training. They used improvisation, rehearsal and performance. Videotape was used to provide feedback and reinforcement. In a follow-up study the treatment group showed 50% less delinquent acts than the alternate treatment and control group.

Many special education and other training programs rely heavily on role playing. The more realistic the role playing, the greater is the impact of the lesson. Dramatic exercises may help students become more invested in their role playing lessons.

The editor of *Education Unlimited* described the importance of socio-drama [drama about interpersonal and social relations] this way: "I strongly believe that if we learn something, it's learned 'from the inside out.' Role playing is a kind of forced empathy." (page 4).

In the same issue appeared the article: "Sociodrama: A Program for Intervention in the Schools" by Gabriela Rosenthal and Joan Tetel-Hanks. The authors briefly described their "socio-drama" method as:

> ...A problem solving technique; the happy, well-adjusted school child serves as a model. It is a process which utilizes improvisational theatre methodology as a means of helping children discover more effective behaviors to handle conflict situations. [Education Unlimited. Vol. 3, No. 4. Fall 1981 p. 9-16]

Interestingly enough, in the same issue of Education Unlimited appears the article, "Development of a Curriculum On Sexual Exploitation and Self-Protection for Handicapped Students" by Ellen Ryerson and Jennifer McGilvray Sundem in which role playing was the key technique for instruction and assessment [pp. 26-31].

CAREER AND JOB SEEKING SKILLS LEARNED IN DRAMA

Having been a vocational evaluator, job developer, work experience coordinator and job search trainer, I have been continually reminded of the importance of improvisational skills and work habits which can be learned in drama exercises. In my recent program JOB SEARCH EDUCATION, theatre games are used to create a sense of group. The group then goes on to create a self-help support group or "job club of job seekers." Also, this program continually uses scripts which are the basis for improvisation in phoning for job leads (and later interview preparation). A sample of these phone scripts appears in the appendix.

Once having found a job, a person must then keep it. This is where work habits can play a decisive role. Many people lose their job, not because they lack the job skills, but because they have poor work habits. Within the framework of skits and rehearsals, one finds tremendous power to shape various work habits. The power comes from the nature of a cooperative task supported by peer pressure.

For example, people must be on time not just for rehearsal, but also entrances and exits. Accepting criticism is part of the directing-acting interchange. This work habit is often in great need of development. When I have had certain students misbehave or act-out, I simply turned to the group for support and their peers quickly "put a lid" on the inappropriate behavior which had diverted us from our rehearsal. Finally, students must be able to handle frustration and errors typified by losing a line. They are taught to ad-lib, stay in character and to persist!

Finally, there are several texts available today which rely on the use of playscripts to teach job finding and job keeping skills. Two excellent sources which have high interest levels and low reading are *GETTING HIRED* and *DON'T GET FIRED* available from Janus Book Publishers in Hayward, California. A sample script from GETTING HIRED appears in this text. A sample script appears in Program Step 2: TEACHING DRAMATIC STRUCTURE THROUGH SHORT SKITS

LIVING ON A LARGER STAGE

One broadens their understanding of others by working on an intuitive level, by becoming another person through a role.[2] We can learn about others by reading about them. But, when we finally use our actions, imagination and speech....when we "learn from the inside out" in a role portrayal...we achieve a deeper, more personal understanding. The intuitive and empathic ability or response is currently said to be very important for upwardly mobile executives. The author believe that this "skill" can be developed and is important for all people.

Everyone plays many roles in today's multi-layered world. Many current models in psychology and sociology rely heavily on a drama metaphor (eg: roles). Communications experts say that effective role playing is a powerful training tool. By trying out several different roles we increase our role play repertoire. In this manner, everyone can better prepare for the various life long scenarios on that larger stage in which we all are actors.

[2] The essay by Pat Raines (A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor) offers some examples of how this process could apply to career exploration. It is found in the appendix.

PROGRAM STEP 1: THEATRE GAMES

PURPOSE

Theatre games are used for many different reasons in dramatic arts curricula and training. Using a fun, sometimes competitive game format the goal is to build the following skills in the beginning actors:

* Ability to work together in a group-ensemble atmosphere
* Warm up exercise prior to performances
* Exploration and growth in expressive skills including:
  - -body movement
  - -language/voice
  - -interaction with others
  - -ability to physicalize or show emotions, thoughts, experiences rather than telling or describing with words
  - -enrichment of fantasy and imagination

TYPES OF GAMES

Sometimes theatre games cross over into improvisation. However, they are by their nature very short, lack a story line, and have immediate ends. Games are grouped by various authors and given different names. The following grouping is used in this program:

GROUP EXERCISES-Designed to get people working together cooperatively.

BODY WARM UPS-Used to get the body limber and to reduce inhibitions for using the body expressively.

PHYSICALIZING-Stresses showing (physicalizing) and demonstrating skills as opposed to verbal skills. These are typically broken down into sensory and experiential exercises. It also improves observational skills.

GAMES WITH PARTNERS-Ties people together with a common activity to enhance interactive skills. Later in skit work we need to make sure characters interact and do not simply read lines in "solo."

GAME SEQUENCES

Typically we mix up the types of games. People are naturally shy at first. Therefore, beginning games are done in groups. Later increase the risk by moving towards individual performance/activities.The following types of guidelines should be used:

Begin with.....	End with
Group games to overcome shyness	Games done with partners, or individually
Games with sedentary, or verbal, or limited movement to overcome reluctance or shyness about sense of touch and movement	Games with major body movements and expressions, or physical touch activities

One also alternates between very active and sedentary or relaxation games. For example, when people do BLIND-BLIND game, everyone is in physical contact moving around the room. After another similar active game we might follow this with the DETECTIVE GAME in which people sit and do guessing in a group.

Here is a typical sequence that moves from low risk games towards high risk ones. These samples are from beginning activities found in group, movement and partnership game categories.

GROUP-BUILDING...STEP 1

NAME-GAME...to introduce people, sedentary and verbal game
DETECTIVE...used in a group, verbal game
BLIND-BLIND...introduces touch, but no individual performance

BODY WARM UPS...STEP 2

JOGGER...body warm up, running in place
ONE SIZE FITS ALL...relaxation game
WALKS...body movement and imagination, still in a group

PHYSICALIZING...STEP 3

GROCERIES...now demonstrating grocery items before the group
PINWHEEL...combines touch and voice and imagination

PARTNERS...STEP 4

TUG OF WAR...pretend tug of war, group imagination exercise
MIRROR-MIRROR...emphasizes eye contact, concentration and mimicry with partner
ADD-A-MACHINE...individual contributes machine motions with voice and action in a large group

These steps could represent a sequence for a day or a week depending on the program schedule. Often students enjoy repeating games and even entire sequences of many games. The above sequence takes the group from individual activities performed in a large annonymous group towards small group work where students perform before or amidst other groups. The major ingredient for success will be the instructor's level of expectations and enthusiasm.The enthusiasm is augmented when the instructor participates in the games (as feasible). Another approach is to use low-risk, beginning activities. This is done by choosing the games listed *first* in the various categories (illustrated in the previous steps 1 through 4). The first games listed tend to be the easiest.

GAME STRUCTURE

The following is an overview of the a sample game. Some text can be used exactly-as-is by the instructor. This text is often found under the general headings of "FOCUS" or "SITUATION" and is indicated in this example (only) by quotation marks. General directions and commentary are usually found under headings like "DE-BRIEF", "VARIATION," or "NOTE" and sometimes at teh beginning of the general directions under "SITUATION".

TITLE: MUDDY FEET
Give the title of the game. Make it colorful. Use the ones in this text or create ones that are more meaningful for your group.A simulation of walking in mud can be called "heavy feet".

FOCUS:
Using some descriptions or questions to the group you stir the imagination. Typically a discussion preceeds the game to give a focus to the activity.

One could ask:
"Who has ever walked in heavy mud?"
"What happens to your feet?"
"What would it be like walking in the leaves? Ocean beach? Sand?"
"What if you were on crutches?"

SITUATION:
Describe the Who/What/Where of your game or give the rules.

Where and Who--"You are alone on a beach."

What and How (Rules/Sequence)--"You are walking slowly across the sand. Show me what it's like. Begin at this side of the room and end at the other."

DEBRIEF:
Ask questions about the game after it is first done:

"What did this remind you of? " (ask about personal experiences)
"Which part was most believable?"
"Could we change it in any way?"
"Which part was easy/hard?"

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

Once a format (TITLE, FOCUS, SITUATION, DEBRIEF) is established, teaching in this subject almost becomes routine. To make the students more effective one should employ a variety of instructional tactics which builds a sense of group, coaches the student and lays out clear expectations. These sorts of things are covered next.

GROUPING

In any partner games students must be assigned to work with people they know least well. Otherwise, the sense of ensemble for the group will not emerge. This also forces initial risk-taking and breaking down of barriers. The first time you can randomize by counting off in a big circle. Then say, "Pick a new partner, someone you have not worked much with before." After several games you need not repeat this. You can assign partners or let people naturally group as long as everyone participates.

PRE-COACHING

Teacher can model or demonstrate the skill first.This may be particularly useful with students lacking any previous dramatic activity, or with students who have a learning disability or disadvantage.

SIDECOACHING

When people do the exercises, you may participate, but you must observe. As you observe you give out clues to improve performance as well as praise for effort. *There is no negative criticism.*

Sometimes you notice as people try the mud walk they move too quickly. One should initially offer indirect advice. You might respond: "The mud is getting heavier. Your legs are sinking in further. Your legs move so slowly."

If more direct advice is warranted try pointing out an appropriate model in the class. Try specific praise, "John's really slugging through that mud" or, "Joan looks like she is up to her knees in mud."

Sometimes one needs to occasionally help define space. This is especially true of mime-type exercises. As students reach into a bag in the GROCERY game they often tend to reach *through* the bag rather than over the edge. You might ask, "Where is the edge of your bag?" Other times you can ask for more detail in movement. Perhaps student is opening a pretend bag of potato chips and does so too easily. You respond with, "Gee, when I open those bags I have to use my teeth." This may slow down the bag opening to a realistic pace.

Sidecoaching at it's best, involves being positive and giving hints to action...rather than directions how. Detail is what counts. Students often show general movement and lack convincing detail (e.g., potato chip bag).

PROBLEM SOLVING IN GROUP ACTIVITIES

Every venture into creative exercises involves a certain risk, unlike teaching a fairly concrete or academic subject. Outcomes are often dependent on people's attitudes towards themselves and one another. Being able to effectively work with a group is important to the instructor's self-confidence as well. In the next section advice is given on how to evaluate your own behavior which you must do before you can evaluate and change others.

OVERCOMING YOUR OWN DOUBTS

Problem: You yourself were afraid, or anxious and conveyed this to the group.
Solution: Show enthusiasm and do the exercise also.

Problem: The game may have been too abstract.
Solution: Use more examples or break game down into parts. Students enjoy more literal games in the beginning.

Problem: A game doesn't work.
Solution: Each group is different. Don't write off a game until you've tried it with more than one group.

ESTABLISHING DISCIPLINE AND EXPECTATIONS

Make sure students know what the general expectations for the class are. For example, they should include:

1) To learn more about acting and expressing one's self.
2) Everyone is expected to perform. You cannot allow people to remain in the group who do not perform.

Follow this sequence when first introducing games:

1) State expectations of the course. Compare activities to well known games like charades, pass-word, etc.
2) Choose games you like and are comfortable with.
3) Pick concrete, easy-to-use and understand games.
4) State consequences:
   a. The beginning week you are expected to participate.
   b. If you need to "rest" occasionally, you may. But this is not allowed to happen more than once the first week. (This allows shy or insecure students to observe at first or until they feel they are a part of the group.
   c.Have students remove themselves to another program or a book assignment when you encounter noncompliance. Don't argue in front of the group.

Here are some specific problems encountered by most instructors and their possible resolution:

WITHDRAWN STUDENT...Let them observe the first lesson or two but set a time limit for participation. Then assign them a partner who is respected by others or held in high esteem, perhaps a leader.

EXHIBITIONIST...In the beginning let them demonstrate during the pre-coaching stage or show alternative presentations during de-briefing. They typically won't quit a routine especially during improvisation. Set time limits for these people. Talk to them privately, admiring their acting prowess but soliciting their support in not intimidating others.

HOSTILE..."This is dumb."--Have them immediately sit out the game without comment. Give them a fixed number of times they may "sit out" (like 2). While sitting out, ask them to write why or give them an academic exercise to keep them busy. Maybe they can invent a game. If their hostile attitude continues then give them probationary status or ask them to find another class.

GENERAL LESSON TIPS

Have Fun

Repeat games people like. Adapt and add to the games, or combine them. Encourage people to invent games. Refer to the first two essays in the Appendix for examples of adapting games.

Get Support or Team It...

I began by asking for student aides in one program and paraprofessionals in another. I was nervous at first. By having a "friend" in the class who would perform "on command" and be enthusiastic I felt more confident. I have teamed with the reading teacher and special educators.

Put Games On 3 x 5 (or 5 x 7) Cards

To simplify handling and reading, put each game on a 3 x 5 or 5 x 7 card along with the TITLE...FOCUS...SITUATION... DEBRIEFING instructions. On the backside keep notes on adaptations or changes. These cards make selecttion, sequencing, and changng lessons quick and easy.

Further Readings

Applied Behavior Change Through Dramatics. Thomas G. Stoffregen. Salem College, Art With Handicapped Program, Salem, West, Virginia 26426. (from a paper delivered at the National Conference on Arts for the Handicapped, Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas, April 4, 1981) This contains methods and several activities for younger children.

Improvisation for the Theatre. Viola Spolin. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1963. This is the "bible" of theatre games for many people.

Theatre Games File. Viola Spolin. St. Louis: Cemrel, Inc. 1975. This contains the games in Viola's book on cards making it a useful instructional material.

Remedial Drama. Sue Jennings. New York: Theatre Arts Books. 1978 Excellent examples for working with severely handicapped.

Improvisational Acting. Jack Held. Belmont: Wadsworth Publish Co., Inc. 1971. Hard to find, but many useful games like Spolin, simpler to digest.

GROUP GAMES

(FOR WARM UP OF GROUP)

TREAT THESE AS COMPETITIVE GAMES...STRESSING FUN

TITLE: NAME GAME

FOCUS: Ever forget somone's name? I can't remember more than 4 names when I teach class. Will you help me?

SITUATION:

Rules-

Sit in a circle and listen carefully.
Say your name and your favorite food. [sport, hobby]
The person after you must repeat the names before...you don't have to remember the food.
When you can't recall the names, we'll help.
Let's see who can remember the most names.

Sidecoach-Give students clues by giving the first letter or a rhyme when they forget the name (blue for Sue).

Variation-People rotate places and repeat until all names are known.

Note-Teacher goes last. (Rarely can I recall more than 6 names.)

TITLE: WORDS*WORDS*WORDS

FOCUS: Have you ever been asked a question and drawn a blank? Let's see what the first word that pops into your mind is when I say something.

SITUATION: (word association type game)

Rules-

Sit in circle.
You must respond in less than 3 seconds or we move on.
Each person gets a different word.

Note-Begin with simple concrete words(animal, car, record), then add words with emotions or adjectives (fragile, crazy, ugly), etc.

Variation-Describe something, but using different words each time.
Use same, or related word, to cue everyone.

TITLE: STORY MACHINE

FOCUS: Let me show you how we can invent a story in a group.

SITUATION:

Rules-
Sit in a circle. We will add words on the same topic.
I begin with a word. You repeat my word. (teacher's car is...clunky...old...ugly)
Then you add your own word to the story.
Add only 1 or 2 words within 3 seconds. (Use first words that comes to mind.)
Do not use words that will offend people.

Note-Begin with something funny, like describing the teacher's car or lunch, etc.
The next person repeats the phrase and adds words, etc.

Variation-Try to create a story. Each person now adds a sentence instead of just a word. Write them down as you go...nobody can remember sentences!
(One fine Tuesday morning as he turned the key...)

TITLE: PINWHEEL

FOCUS: Let's travel to outer space and float around while we make up a story. First we listen to the sounds of space. Then we make up a story.

SITUATION:

Rules
Sit in a circle and take off shoes.
Lay down and have feet touching at the center. Each person is a spoke on a pinwheel.
Close your eyes. You are floating in space.
First, make a sound in space.
The person on your left repeats the sound, then the next person, etc. as the sound travels around the pinwheel.
See how quickly the sound can travel around the pinwheel.

Variation-Now make a story that moves around the pinwheel using the sounds with expression instead of words.

TITLE: ANTI-GRAVITY

FOCUS: Ever wonder what it would be like to be able to float in space?

SITUATION*

Six people stand in a circle shoulder-to-shoulder.
One person stands in the center.

Outside people, put your hands up chest high with your palms facing the center-person.
You will catch the center person.

Center person, relax, keep knees straight, don't bend.
Center person, fall backward, forward or around while your feet stay in one place.

Outside people gently catch center person and push the person upright.
As the center person feels the floating sensation, open your eyes and pick someone else for the center.

Note*-*It is very important tthat he **center person keeps feet together and knees **locked**; otherwise, if hey fall downwards and they may not be caught since they go straight down and don't fall outwards where they can be caught.*

De-Brief-What did it feel like? What attitude did you have to have toward the group? (trust)

TITLE: BLIND-BLIND

FOCUS: Have you ever wondered what it would be like to lose your sight?
How would you get around at first?
Let me show you how we travel train a newly blind person...

Teacher demo--show that the blind person discreetly holds your elbow as you both travel. The sighted person also describes obstacles like doors, moving sideways, etc. Demonstrate this in an obstacle course.

SITUATION:

Who-- You must pick a partner you know very little about.
What--You have suddenly become blind. Close your eyes (or blindfold).
Your partner will guide you through this obstacle course.
When finished you will trade places.
Remember, go slowly and tell your blind friend how you want him to move.

Debrief: Do you know any blind people?
What are some things blind people do today that amaze you? (sports, recreation, etc.)
What attitude did you have to have toward your partner?
Was anyone uncomfortable?

TITLE: HANDICAPS

FOCUS: Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in a wheelchair or a walker or on crutches? Let's find out how life would change.

Materials:
Devices for handicapped: Walker, crutches, wheelchair.

SITUATION:
Use one of the devices and do the following:
Get a drink of water or pop.
Sit in a chair.
Write on the blackboard.
Take off a shoe.
Comb your hair.
Open a book.
Go to the bathroom.

Variation: Tape hand closed, tie one hand to back, use fogged glasses for visual impairment, try ear plugs to simulate hearing impairments, give directions with large vocabularies or using foreign words to simulate learning disabilties.

Note: Don't be surprised if someone with a physical disability has a stereotypic or uninformed view on a person with an intellectual disability. This can be a broadening experience for *everyone*.

Debrief: How did you feel when you were trying these exercises? Embarrassed? Different?

We all have strengths and limits. Our limits are our handicaps.
Most of us disguise these and play to our strengths.
Everyone share a handicap and a strength. I'll go first. (e.g., I'm afraid of water, I can't write letters good, etc., but I amgood at ....)

TITLE: DETECTIVE

FOCUS: A good detective has what qualities? (Observation)
Let's see how good an observer you are with this game.

SITUATION:
Sit in a group semi-circle.
One person leaves the room.A leader is chosen .
The leader starts a movement like: patting leg, facial grimacing, twitching, etc.
Everyone is to follow the leader without trying to look at the leader.
The leader must change this movement every 15 seconds.
The rest of the group tries to change with the leader without giving the leader away.
The person who is outside is asked back in.
Using your powers of observation you will try to guess the leader.
That person gets 3 tries, then I will pick a new person.
If the person guesses correctly, he will select a person to replace himself.

TITLE: CARTOON

FOCUS: How many people can draw like an artist? Raise your hand.
Remember how you first learned to draw?
In this game you will use a sketch you make to help your team guesss.
If you sketch like me, it should be very funny.

SITUATION:
Divide into 2 teams by counting off.
Put two different objects in two separate bags without the teams seeing them.
Each team has a paper and pencil.
Each team has a separate set of items.
When I say "go" the first person (the cartoonist) in each team will rush over to the bag, look, and draw it (or study it only).
Then the cartoonist comes back to the team and uses a drawing to show the team members what he saw.
The rest of your team must try to guess what the cartoonist saw.
The cartoonist cannot talk--only draw. The rest of the team can talk and make guesses.
When the team guesses, raise your hands. First done, wins.

Debrief: Discuss the importance of detail.

Note: Begin with familiar objects like a paper clip, scissors, pencil, envelope, comb, shoe, glasses, etc.

TITLE: BODY LETTERS

FOCUS: What are some definitions of the word "teamwork?"
(Challenge the entire group to work as a team.)

SITUATION:
Everyone form a tight knit knot in the center of large open space.
The leader will stand on chair where he/she can overlook group.
The leader will call out letters the group is to form. CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY!
Begin with easy letters (O, T, I, X) to harder ones (E, S, R, K,G).

Variations: Do within a time limit (20 seconds).
Put letters on the board first to remind people if working with a slow learning group.
Side-coach: Give feedback on letter shapes, using humor. (Is that X tired?)

Debrief: Discuss what type of teamwork they were using...group, leaders, combination.

TITLE: HUMAN KNOT/TEAM WORK

FOCUS: What does it mean when we say, "It's a jungle out there"?
Do you think we live in a jungle? How do people cooperate when they live in a jungle?

SITUATION:
Everyone form a large circle.
Look at a person standing opposite you.
You must try and get to where that person is standing.
You cannot walk backwards. You must travel through this circle to the other side.
If you touch someone on the way over, then you must hold their hand or link arms, because now you are stuck to them.

Keep trying to move, even though you are stuck to others.
It takes team work.

Pick 4 people--we do 4 at a time.
One last thing...you must do this with your eyes closed at all times.
Ready...look across the circle, see the place you are trying to get to.
Now close your eyes...begin crossing the circle.

Note: People will typically end up in a big knot in the center...all stuck together. Those who get through must communicate a lot.

Debrief: Why do we call this the "Human Knot"?
In what way do we live in a "human knot" ?
How does being a part of a knot help us in the jungle?
How is doing a theatre game or skit like being in a human knot?

BODY WARM-UPS

INSTRUCTOR SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THESE ALONG WITH GROUP. THESE ARE TYPICALLY DONE IN A CIRCLE FACING EACH OTHER, THOUGH SOME CAN BE DONE INDIVIDUALLY. SPACE IS REQUIRED. THESE ARE DONE TO GET THE BODY INVOLVED ACTIVELY OR TO EXPERIENCE RELAXATION...AND TO TIE IMAGINATION TO MOVEMENT.

TITLE: JOGGER

FOCUS: Does anyone ever jog or do track? Ever run in place? How does it make you feel?

SITUATION:
Let's all stand in a circle.
You must be an arm's distance or more apart.
Suppose we begin with a slow warm-up jog?

Sidecoach: Now you are being chased. Show me how you run.
Suddenly we are running on t.v....they switch to slow motion.
Your sock fell down...your foot is sore...you just passed a beautiful woman or handsome man on your left.

Debrief: Why do we do this? (to get our bodies going, make us feel alive)

TITLE: STRETCHES

FOCUS: How does a cat relax? Why do people study relaxation today?
Do hypnotists use relaxation exercises?

SITUATION:
I'll call out different things for you to do to make muscles relax:
Shake your hands as though they just pivot at the wrist and flip-flop.
Rotate your foot just at the ankle.
Suppose your arms (or legs) were like leaves falling from a tree... show how they would flutter gently to the ground.
Rotate our shoulders separately (then together).
Clench and relax different muscle groups (specifically call out groups...face, biceps, stomach, etc.)

TITLE: CLIMBING

FOCUS: Pretend you are climbing a ladder to look over a fence. For years you wondered what was on the other side of this fence. Close your eyes and imagine.

SITUATION:
I'll tell you when you reach the top. It is a large ladder. Let's begin climbing slowly--we have a ways to go. (1-2 minutes)
Now you've reached the top; rest on the ledge.
Open your eyes. Look over the top and tell me what you see.
Get down any way you can. Show your feelings with you face.

TITLE: FINGER MAGIC

FOCUS: What would it be like if your fingers had eyes?

Materials: Similar to CARTOON. You may vary with items like spaghetti, fuzzy items, brushes, toys, cigarettes, etc.

SITUATION:

Everyone sit in a line facing forward.
You will pass objects down the line--behind you.
You must not look at the object.
You can feel the objects for 15 seconds, then you must pass it on.
After everyone has felt it we will take turns guessing what it is.

TITLE: JUMP ROPE

FOCUS: Who has played jump rope when younger? Why do boxers jump rope?

SITUATION:

Each of you has an imaginary paper bag.
You will repeat what I do.
Take out one end of a jump rope.
Take out the rest of the rope, a little at a time until you can hold both ends.
Let go of one end of the rope and wiggle it--watch it wiggle.
Pick up both ends, swing rope over your head, then step over it.
Now jump with me (teacher demonstrates rhythm).

Sidecoach: How round or thick is the rope? Make a coil showing me how much rope you have.

Note: Believability is enhanced when people use concentration and the movement of their head and hands follows the rope movements.

Variation: Do jump rope games with small groups, one and two ropes at a time that others must enter and jump within. Slap foot to floor every time the rope hits the ground. Do this in rhythm. Have people jump rope individually.

TITLE: PUPPET

FOCUS: Have you ever seen a ventriloquist? A marionette?
What would it be like if you lived as a puppet at the end of a string?

SITUATION:
I want you to help me tell a story about a puppet that lost its strings.
First, everyone show me *how* you walk with strings attached to your knees, hands, waist, and head.
How do you move your hands?
How do you nod your head?
Suddenly scissors appear.
As the strings are cut show me what happens to our puppet...
Your arm strings are cut.
Your leg strings are cut (your head and neck strings are still on)...show me how you dangle.
You have 2 strings left--one on your back and one on your head
We cut your head string.
Finally we cut your last string...what happens?

TITLE: ONE SIZE FITS ALL

FOCUS: Ever wish you were a bird or airplane? Close your eyes and imagine being a balloon.
See the balloon being blown up and then suddenly the air goes out ?
I'm going to challenge you to change your size like a balloon.

SITUATION:
See who can make themselves into the smallest shape possible.
Now I'll blow you up like a balloon--slowly.
See how big you can get.

Variation: Do this slowly, possibly with music; it is a relaxation exercise.

TITLE: CAROUSEL

Materials: Music from a marching, rousing band.

FOCUS: Ever go to a circus? Ever ride the merry-go-round? We call it a carousel.

SITUATION:
I want you to become the horses on a merry-go-round.
As I play the music you go up and down.
Now the merry-go-round begins to turn while you go up and down.
Let's get this merry-go-round going in a circle.

TITLE: BALLOON

FOCUS: See ONE SIZE FITS ALL

SITUATION:

Pick a partner.
One of you is a balloon and the other will blow up the balloon.
Show me how the balloon looks before being blown up.
Now slowly blow up the balloon...when it gets real big it floats away.
Now reverse partners.
With a partner blow up a small imaginary balloon. Toss it back and forth.

Note: This is like physicalizing exercises requiring imagination and showing.

Sidecoach: How fast do balloons travel? (slowly)

Debrief: Did you feel like a balloon? What made you feel like a balloon?

TITLE: WALKS

FOCUS: Ever get trapped in mud? Mud up to your knees? How did you walk?

SITUATION:

Line up at one side of the room
We will walk to the other side of the room.
As you cross we are going through a magic field.
I will tell you how the field changes.
It could be mud, water, sand. You show me how you walk.
Here are the walks.....YOU ARE:

-barefoot walking across a hot pavement.
-old and walking with a cane.
-walking in knee deep mud.
-on a skateboard going across pavement.
-in a wheelchair in the hallway.
-walking across a cold and very windy place...
-walking into the wind and you wear a hat.
-walking through piles of leaves.
-underwater and walking about an ocean bottom.
-on Jupiter and weigh 3 times heavier(saying slowly). How will you get across?
-a muscle bound macho guy, strut your stuff, show off as walk.
-a baby learning to walk for the first time.
-a puppet walking across a stage. Suddenly one string to your leg is broken.
-walking across an icy pond.
-on a narrow log, crossing a deep fast-moving river.
-a robot walking to the refrigerator to get an oil sandwich.
-an old car...going down the road.
-a hot rod...pulling into a burger stand.

PHYSICALIZING

THIS IS LIKE MIME. ONE MUST CONTINUALLY SIDE-COACH STUDENTS TO SHOW (INSTEAD OF TELLING) WHAT IS BEING PORTRAYED. THE KEY IS PRECISION MOVEMENT, TIED TO IMAGINATION.

SENSE OF TOUCH

TITLE: FIRE-FIRE

FOCUS: Before they had fire engines and pumps how did they put out fires? (buckets)

SITUATION:

We will form a bucket brigade and put out a fire at the end. However, we have different size buckets I'll call out to you.
Line up. Let me hand you the first bucket, half full of water.
Show how you pass it, trying not to spill.
Dump it on the fire.
Now the buckets are very small, like a cup.
Now I found a very large bucket. It holds lots of water.
Watch your back.

TITLE: MY FAVORITE PET

FOCUS: Who has a pet? Do you have to be careful how you hold it?
When friends first pick up your pet, what do you tell them?

SITUATION:

Sit in a circle.
You will be asked to hold, pet and handle an imaginary pet.
Show us how you hold a: cat...bird...turtle.
Then pass it on.
Now pick up an imaginary pet.
Show how you hold and pet it.
We will try to guess what kind it is.

TITLE: MY FAVORITE DRINK

FOCUS: We all have favorite drinks. Lots of times we have to mix them up to make it special. Let's see what kind of drink you will make for yourself.

SITUATION:

Someone volunteer to make a drink up in front of us.
We'll guess what it is...before you drink it.
Remember: don't leave anything out like spoons or ice or coffee pots.

Sidecoach: "Show us if it's hot (or cold, frozen)...Do you stir it, smell it?

TITLE: GROCERY BAG

FOCUS & DEMONSTRATION: Who does the grocery shopping in your home?
Can you show us how you carry the bags?
We'll try to guess what you would bring home. Watch me first.

[Teacher demonstrates the importance of showing detail with a potatoe chip bag:]
I have this heavy, pretend grocery bag.
I'm going to take out a food item and eat it. You try to guess what it is.

Note: first show the fingers trying to open the bag, then use your teeth.

Debrief: It was important to show detail, wasn't it? How did you know it was in a bag?
Notice how little details or clues are very importan....maybe more important than the potatoe chip itself.

SITUATION Now, someone else reach in my grocery bag and we'll guess what you are eating. Remeber to show us with detail, you can't use words.

SENSE OF SMELL/TASTE

TITLE: CONDIMENTS

Materials: Ask students to bring in an envelope with their favorite seasoning for various types of food (e.g., desert, salad, breads, oven, fry, etc.)
Do not let people know what it is, simply number the envelopes.

FOCUS: How does food taste when you are sick and your nose is stuffed?
Let's see how good you are at using your nose to taste these envelopes.

SITUATION:
I want you to sniff the envelope like this...

(Note: illustrate the safe way: do not inhale with the nose, but waft the odor towards one's nose and sample with the nose)

If you think you know the seasons, tell us the kind of food you might use it on, *but* don't say the seasoning's name.
After everyone gets a chance to smell it, you'll guess the seasoning's name out loud.

TITLE: NOSE KNOWLEDGE

FOCUS: You will do a commercial for different things you want us to buy. You will use the product, then we will try to guess the product's name after you show us how it smells.

SITUATION:
First, let's put words on the board for products that have strong smells either good or bad (e.g., pizza, diapers, popcorn, candy, cleanser).
Go up and choose a word, but don't tell us.
Pick up the product and smell it.
Then start using the product without words. We'll still try to guess.

SENSE OF SOUND AND VOICE

TITLE: CONDUCTOR

FOCUS: Ever go to a symphony or see a conductor on tv? How does the conductor use his hands? (rhythm, loudness).
We all will become an orchestra that someone gets to conduct or lead.

SITUATION:
Sit in a group while the teacher first conducts.
Someone make up a sound.
Everytime I move my hands like this...you make the sound.
If I go like this, stop...or like this, keep the sound going.

See if you can do it with my rhythms.
Now, everytime I move my hands like this it means get *louder*...like this means get *softer*.

See if you can follow me.
Who else would like to be a conductor?

TITLE: I SAY HELLO

FOCUS: This is a guessing game using your ears to recognize people.

Materials: Blindfold and empty space to move in.

SITUATION:
Here are the rules--
You put on a blindfold.
You move around slowly.
All you can say is the word "HELLO"
Try to guess who they are by the sound of their "HELLO"
Guess their names.
When you guess two names, take off your blind-fold and step back.

TITLE: LONG WINDED

FOCUS: Have you ever seen a play or movie where you couldn't hear the actors very well? How could they have been better heard?
Here are some exercises actors use to get better voice on stage.

SITUATION:
Put these sounds or words on a blackboard: B, P, T, LL, ER, ST, NST, SK, SH, ING, S,D...Told, Tell, Tall, Pit, Sit, Bit, Sing, Shop, Scope

Show how to say these sounds using exaggerated lip movements.
Do first in group at moderate rate...then increase rate.

Then ask people how quickly they can pronounce clearly the following:

Beginning Sound Emphasis: school, skill, scalp, shall, ship, shale

Ending Sound Emphasis: against, must, just,going, flowing, sailing, sails, births, shelves, dead, fired, stopped, teenager, screwdriver, believer

Variation: Get tongue twisters from drama teacher.

Note: Look for dropped syllables, "lazy lips", lost volume etc.

TITLE: LONG WINDED SCRIPTS

Materials: Copy short scripts you might later use in class. First underline sounds you have emphasized above. Then try following exercises first in group, then competitively.

Long Talker

FOCUS: Talk about breath control. Practice inhaling and exhaling at a controlled rate.

SITUATION:
Read scripts seeing who can go the longest on only one breath. Time it. (any pauses means end of breath)

Exaggerated Tongue

FOCUS: Point out underlined sounds of words.

SITUATION:
Read together, when you get to that underlined word/sound, you must change your pitch or volume or speed to emphasize sound/word. Teacher demonstrates and then asks others to try.

TITLE: LONG WINDED SCRIPTS..continued

Speedy Tongue

FOCUS/SITUATION: See how many lines you can read in one minute. One point for each line. Lose one point for each word we can't hear or understand.

Slo-mo Tongue

FOCUS: See who can read the fewest lines in slow-motion talk for 30-60 seconds.

SITUATION:
Like exaggerated tongue, they must keep saying words, but can exaggerate.

Volume Control

FOCUS: How can you whisper on stage and still be heard by the audience?

SITUATION:
Practice reading script in a stage whisper (ask drama teacher for explanation and demonstration of how to do this)

Variation: Have student at one end of room reading script. First read script in whisper (or stage whisper). Continue reading and increasing volume until excessively loud.

Note: This helps people with soft voices use breath control to gain volume.

GAMES WITH PARTNERS

STUDENTS LEARN TO WORK WITH OTHERS...TO TRUST AND RELY ON OTHERS. STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE PAIRED WITH BUDDIES. PHYSICAL CONTACT AND EYE CONTACT WILL OFTEN BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THESE GAMES.

TITLE: MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL....

FOCUS: What do you do when you first go to the mirror in the morning?

SITUATION:

Pick a partner you don't know very well, or someone who is not a close buddy.
Get a seat and face each other.
One of you will be a mirror and must copy the other person's actions.
Decide who is the mirror now.
The other person will now do what I say. Mirrors, you try to copy.
Move your right hand slowly...now move your left hand.
Slowly move both hands...then nod.
Now you just woke up. Go to the mirror and shave.
Change roles (repeat beginning hand movement exercise)
Now you are putting on clothes for school.
You will have to stand to do some of this. Do it slowly.

Debrief: What is eye-contact? What is concentration? Why is eye-contact important when first meeting someone?

TITLE: MUSICAL PARTNERS

Materials: Need music and odd number of people.

FOCUS: Ever play musical chairs? How does it work? This is like it.

SITUATION:

Everyone get a partner and we have one extra person who will be ___.
Touch your partner's (elbow, knee, neck, nose, etc.).
When I play the music you must leave your partner.
Find someone else to touch on any place you like...using good judgment.
When the music stops the person who has no partner tries to find one next time.

TITLE: STUCK ON YOU

FOCUS: Ever do a gunny sack race at a picnic?

SITUATION:

Get a new partner.
Touch them either on elbow, knee, forehead with the same part of your body.
Then when I say "go" we'll see who can cross this line and return.
If you lose touch, you must stop and count to 10 and then continue.

TITLE: SCULPTURE

Materials: Active music is useful.

FOCUS: Ever work with clay or do sculpture? Describe what it is like....
How do people win ribbons in an art contest?
How do they title their work?
You will be doing a work of art with a partner. Decide who is #1 and who is #2 partner.

SITUATION:
Go stand by a a new partner.

Listen to these directions partner#1--wiggle like a bag jelly or a foot-loose dancer, while I play this music.
Keep wiggling or moving until I stop music. The *FREEZE!*

Partner #2--You are an artist. Draw an imaginary line around partner #1 just like you were outlining them.
Now you can create a brand new sculpture by moving that person's body any way you want. They are soft and moldable, like clay.

We will give our blue ribbon to the most interesting works.

All Partners#2--All artists--join me for a tour of the clay sculptures. We'll choose the 3 for imaginary prizes.
Think up a title that your masterpiece is to be called.

Debrief: Discuss titles, and the experience...

Note: Music is not critical.

TITLE: LIFT THAT BARGE...TOTE THAT WEIGHT

FOCUS: Have you ever worked in a group to build something or plan something?

SITUATION:
Divide into work crews of 2-4 people.
You cannot talk, but you can point.
I will give you some work to do and you show us how your team will do it.

Example:
Take a large door and put it on a set of hinges.
Plant a large, heavy tree.
Stack a cord of wood.

Note: You may first solicit jobs from the group and list the steps in doing them.

Sidecoach:
Show me how heavy that ___ is.
Don't step through the ___ as you put the ___ in place.
Where are you putting your tools?

TITLE: TUG-OF-WAR

FOCUS: What is a tug of war like? What happens when you lose?

SITUATION:

Divide into teams and face each other for a tug of war. Team A and B.
We will use this large, imaginary rope.
Pick up the rope and show me how you hold it.
Now slowly pull the rope until it is tight.
I am the newscaster--listen to me to know what to do:

"Looks like Team A is slipping a bit as Team B pulls them slowly.
Now Team A really puts on the steam and drags B back.
Team B is giving one great big tug together--A is quickly losing ground.
Oh my, Team A just let go of the rope!"

TITLE: SOUND MACHINE

Introduction: Class could listen to a music synthesizer or sound track for sound effects first.
Then discuss what the sounds could represent.

FOCUS: The world is full of sounds. What is the sound of (different sounds)?

SITUATION:

Sit in a circle with your backs to the center.
Each of you will now make up a sound.
Let me hear it one at a time.
Now we will all do our sounds together.
As I point to you, you begin your sound.
Concentrate on your sounds and try to keep it going.

Debrief: Why were you not facing each other?
What were you thinking about?

TITLE: ADD A MACHINE

FOCUS: Now we'll create a machine just like we made a sound machine.
Remember your sounds from before--you can use them again.
What are some machine movements you have seen?
How does a piston move? A laundry machine? Robot loader?
Who can show us an invented movement?
Who can show us a movement using their whole body?

SITUATION:
I want (student) to take his invented movement and begin doing that.
He will add to this movement a sound...good.
Now I want (student) to add her movement to his. Go over and add to his machine.

At some point you must touch or move near his machine.

Good, now add a sound.

The rest watch and as soon as you get an idea for a machine movement and sound you go up and do it.

I will begin pointing at you in 15 seconds if you haven't gone up to our machine...then you go up and add one if you are still waiting.

I will control the electricity to the machine so listen to me.

Sidecoach-Suddenly the machine slows down...we have a brown out...it grinds to a halt. Then the machine starts up slowly. Suddenly we get extra juice and you are moving faster and faster.....Power line down...Electricity off!

PROGRAM STEP 2:

TEACHING DRAMATIC STRUCTURE THROUGH SHORT SKITS

INTRODUCTION: DRAMATIC STRUCTURE

Many drama programs move from theatre games immediately to improvisation. Unlike a game activity, improvisation requires students to tell a more complete story.

The story often requires a sense of dramatic structure in order to be successful. The dramatic structure is not always apparent to students. Therefore, prior to teaching improvisation, I have found it useful to first introduce short skits using scripts. In this manner, a dramatic structure (as embodied in complete story) is conveyed to students through acting rather than discussion or lecture.A sample skit is included. Read over the sample skit entitled: *Ask For a Tryout* by Durlynn Anema; Janus Book publication *Get Hired* (appearing on the following pages).

We can define the dramatic structure of this short skit usingthe following terms which have been previously useful :

Title: Taken from the text. [Sometimes students make their own-as is discussed later].

Focus: Defines the problem the characters are dealing with--Sharon, who lacks work experience, wants a job. However, everyone asks for experience. One day she noted a problem in a local neighborhood grocery. If she can prove to the employer that she can solve this problem then the employer might hire her. The problem is the long lines that could be solved by hiring a bagger.

Situation:

Who-Sharon is a high school student. She shops at Mr. Lin's store. She knows the owner, Mr. Lin, is very busy.

Where-(Define place) Mr. Lin's grocery is small. It is a very busy place. Mr. Lin is often setting up displays or cleaning vegetables when not doing check-out.

What-Sharon must approach this busy employer and make Mr. Lin believe that she could improve his business by being a bagger. Sharon must show her interest in the store and the store's problems. She must handle Mr. Lin's resistance and offer a solution. She is selling herself, her abilities to Mr. Lin. **Show** how Sharon tries to make the sale. Notice the word **SHOW** is crucial. We don't tell. We show with dialogue, actions, gestures.

Endings Are Important In Skits and Improvisations

Unlike games, endings are important in dramatic stories.Sharon gets an offer, a call back, or leaves to search more for work. Each dramatic event must have an ending. The characters will either change their attitude and relationship (possible offer of a job) or a character will have to leave to resolve the problem. In this case, Sharon must look elsewhere or do something further to convince Mr. Lin.

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Ask for a Tryout

Sharon often stopped at the Good Pickings market on her way home from school. It had the best fruits and vegetables in town. But whenever she went to the market, she would have to stand in a long line at the checkout counter.

One day, Sharon heard a man in line say, "I hate coming in here in the afternoon. But it's the only time I can shop."

"Me too," said the lady in front of him. "I've decided to go to the Southside Market from now on. Maybe their stuff isn't as good, but they care more about their customers."

Sharon listened with interest. She noticed that the reason the checkout line moved so slowly was that the owner did his own bagging. The line would move much faster if someone else did the bagging.

Sharon had been looking for a job without any luck. Now she thought, "I'm going to see if Mr. Lin will hire me here as a bagger. But I'd better come back when he's not so busy."

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Good Pickings Gets a Helper

The time is 8:00 a.m. on the next day. Sharon stops at the Good Pickings on her way to school. The market has not yet opened for business. The owner, Mr. Lin, is filling the lettuce bin.

MR. LIN: *(He sees Sharon walking toward him.)* I'm not open yet, miss.

SHARON: I know, sir. But I wonder if I could talk with you for a minute.

MR. LIN: What is it? I'm very busy.

SHARON: Seems to me you always are. I know it sure was busy here yesterday afternoon when I came in to shop.

MR. LIN: It's always like that in the late afternoon. Try to come in earlier.

SHARON: I can't. Neither can the other people who work or go to school. I was thinking just had someone bagging for you.

MR. LIN: Can't afford anyone else. Costs too much money. *(He keeps working.)*

SHARON: But wouldn't more people come to the store if they knew they could get faster service?

MR. LIN: *(He looks sharply at Sharon.)* What did you come here for anyway?

SHARON: I'd be glad to help you out in the afternoon. I could bag groceries and clean up and help make things easier for you.

MR. LIN: Don't think you'd make it any easier. Even minimum wage would be too much.

SHARON: Just two extra customers an hour could probably help pay my salary. And

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then there would be better feelings about your store.

MR. LIN: What do you mean by that?

SHARON: The other day when I was in line, I heard some customers say they were tired of always having to wait. One customer talked about going over to Southside Market. She said the service was better there.

MR. LIN: I try to give good service . . . when I'm not too busy.

SHARON: But when you are busy, that service is not good enough, and you're losing customers. All I want is a chance to show you that an extra person here in the afternoon can bring in more money for you.

MR. LIN: *(He looks doubtful.)* I don't know. . . .

SHARON: I tell you what. Just hire me for one month. If business doesn't pick up by then, you can let me go. Just give it a try. O.K.?

MR. LIN: No . . . I don't think so. . . .

SHARON: What about two weeks? Your customers deserve the best. You have a much better selection of fresh fruits and vegetables than the Southside Market. Let me help you.

MR. LIN: O.K. Come back tomorrow before school and I'll teach you how to bag. Then you can start bagging after school. If you're good, maybe I'll keep you. We'll see.

SHARON: Thanks, Mr. Lin. I know I can really help out if you let me. See you tomorrow!

CHOOSING A SCRIPT/SKIT

The type of script suggested here has the following criteria:

Low reading level:
3rd grade is universally accessible.

Short and simple:
Few characters (not more than 2-4).
Few pages (not more than 6--single scene typically).
Few stage directions.
Strong, simple characters and emotions that are easy to understand or show in acting.
Themes dealing with your population. For young adults this includes peer pressure and relations, family demands versus independence, getting a job, dealing with authority figures.

These scripts should be action-centered with an obvious problem. This minimizes the directing required. Later more sophisticated scripts with multiple scenes and more characters can be introduced. In this latter case more directing efforts and longer rehearsals will be needed. Typical publishers for schools include Read and Scholastic Magazines listed in the bibliography.

Scripts which easily meet the above criteria can be found in the Janus Book Publications under titles (for secondary and adult education):

The Big Hassle...Problems of growing up (good starting source).
The Put Down Pro...Problems of peer relations.
Get Hired & Don't Get Fired...Job finding and retention.
Sharing an Apartment...Problems of finding and sharing apartments.

When using more extended scripts with multiple scenes there are increased scheduling and management tasks. At the end of this section these types of additional concerns are listed under a later section entitled*Directing Longer, Multiple Scene Scripts*.

SOURCES FOR SCRIPTS

One is constantly seeking new scripts. Many small publishing houses come and go in this field. Rather than suggest specific companies which may not exist by the time this comes out in print, a networking concept is suggested instead.Begin by asking any of the following people script sources. Be sure to specify the length, number of characters, reading level and/or age and typical subject matter you are interested in:

Librarian
Recreation Department
Drama instructors
Directors in community or private theatres
Puppeteers
University/College drama instructors, particulary those associated with playwriting or creative dramatics
Drama/Theatre Associations (eg: American Theatre Association)
Readers Theatre magazines
Attend statewide drama conferences

Finally, one can consider the "home grown variety". Two adapted scripts written by my special education high school students are included in the Playwriting section of this manuscript . Using a variety of written and improvisation experiences, playwriting can be done in a group or individually and be enjoyed by all.

INTRODUCING THE SCRIPT...STEPS 1 THROUGH 5

My initial device is to have small groups of 2-4 students simultaneously working on scripts. The following steps are recommended for introducing a new group to script/skit work.

Step 1(optional): Observe A Rehearsal Or Drama Class Related Activity.

Step 2: Discuss People's Experiences With Plays And The Play's Usefulness.

Has anybody ever been in a play? (ask them to share experience)
How is a play different than a movie? (live)
Where are plays done?
How do people prepare for plays? (rehearsal, memorize lines, etc.)
What is a reader's theatre? (no memorization, use scripts)
Why do people like being in a play?
How could learning to act help you to find a job? (interviews)
What kinds of work use acting skills?

Here are some examples of the above:

Telemarketing...This new field uses scripts when soliciting by phone. This skill is used in fund raising, and job seeking. The Appendix example from *Job Search Education* illustrates this concept for job seekers

Health and Care Fields...Empathy in health and related jobs in child and geriatric care. Nurses, aides, and trainers must show understanding of others like actors understand roles and characters.

Sales... Salespeople must learn to convince others with words and action just as actors do. They must generate enthusiasm and believability in their product.

Step 3: Introduce The Script And Performance Options

Discuss skits you have in mind.
Pass out scripts to look at, and describe the plots.
Discuss performance options such as:
Inviting another class.
Inviting selected teachers, counselors, or administrators.
Videotaping for the class or any of the visitors mentioned previously.

[If students seem resistive, ask why? Usually , they are nervous. Ask questions like: "Do you think "real" actors are nervous? What is the value in taking risks?"]

Step 4: Orient Students To Roles And Expectations By Discussing The Following:

What does a director do?
(organize characters, decide who does what, suggest improvements)

What do stage hands do?

What do other actors do while waiting their turns?
(watch or rehearse, no interruption, remain very quiet once a performance starts)

What makes an actor or actress convincing when they act?
(students tyically suggest "realistic" or "convincing" examples)

How can one's voice be unrealistic in a scene with anger?
a. What makes it realistic?
b. How can one's face or body be realistic in scene with laughter?
c. What does it mean to "stay in character?"
(When making a mistake one tries to ad-lib in-character. Avoid talking to one's self or the audience about the mistake.)

Step 5: Orient Students To The Parts Of A Script

Look over the script and point out:
a. Narrator or introductory parts
b. Character Names and stage directions, which are not read and usually appear in italics
c. Read a script and discuss how students would stage it if they were director (entrances, props, space used, mime, emotions)

DIRECTING A SHORT, 1-SCENE SCRIPT

With your first scripts the instructor/director should make the initial character assignments. Pair people who can work together. Avoid putting all the low readers or behavior-problem students together. Be bold and consider the following:

Non-readers--can be cast as characters who are hesitant or unsure since uneven reading can be interpreted as characterization. Poor readers often do good at improvisation. They can be similarly cast in parts for sullen or angry/depressive types where reading hesitancy is seen as "characterization."

Disruptive--can often play leads with dramatic conflict, argumentative characters or people portraying a "picked on" attitude.

Teacher on stage--You may have to participate on days when students miss class.

REHEARSAL FORMAT STEPS 1 THROUGH 6

Use the following steps. You will have to rotate amongst the various student groups sharing support, advice and supervision.

Step 1: Read Over Script

In their groups, students read the story out loud. Sometimes you need not cast, but let students decide this after reading. The purpose is to see the lines, hear them, and recognize what line cues are present (e.g., when to give the next line). For low reading groups, havestudents first read silently, then out loud.

Step 2: Seated...Students work on Voice, Cues and Emotion

Major emphasis should be on reading volume. Students should hold scripts up and avoid laying them on the table. With scripts held in the air voices are not directed out, down, or lost in their chests.

Another major emphasis is following lines and not missing cue. You will often need to make general, bold, simple suggestions which add some emphasis. Make few (no more than 1-2 per page of script). Typical suggestions could be the following:

- Add pauses to show someone is thinking or reacting
- Add inflection when someone is unsure about asking a question
- Show anger or loudness in voice where appropriate

Step 3: Stand and Add Gesture

This gets students used to standing (and later moving). The students will usually begin to add some enthusiasm and energy to their part once they are confident of where they should stand.Typical gestures might be:

- Worried...rubbing head, head in hands, wringing hands
- Waiting...look at clock, pacing
- Angry...arms folded, eyebrows down/knit
- Sad...droop shoulders, shrugs, slow speech
- Happy...large movements, smiles, erect posture

Remember, improvising and thinking on the spot is useful with other life skills such as job interviews, phone marketing, networking,etc.

Step 4: Add Movement, Blocking, Props

This can be added to Step 3 or done separately the following day. Consider using props that can help disguise or hide the scripts (clipboard, newspaper, etc.). Discuss entrances and exits then write them down. When the narrator, do you want the characters doing mime related to the plot. This is a nice way to give background at the beginning of the skit?

Step 5: Dress Rehearsal

Dress rehearsal involves running through the script, without stopping to correct errors. If a person loses his place or lines he *must* **stay in character.** Therefore, emphasize ad libbing, and improvising as best one can. The other actors continue in their lines until the ad libbing character finds some lines the rest can latch onto.

You should help students prepare for this eventuality in a performance. To do this,offer to play a part in their skit and then purposefully introduce an error or skip a line. Make sure your students understand that you will be doing this to help them prepare for performance.

Begin by demonstrating how to handle a stage error! Have the students first mis-cue you, or purposefully lose your place. Then illustrate how you would stay in character through ad libbing lines until you find your place. [Remember, improvising and thinking on the spot occurs with other life skills such as job interviews, phone marketing, networking etc.]

During dress rehearsal consider having them perform to other class members. This gives practice before an audience and heightens the realism.(See section about preparing actors for stage jitters, at the end of this section.)

Step 6: Present/Perform

Make sure your class understands proper stage etiquette. No one is to talk while others are performing! People will make mistakes and you must support them. This may happen to others. Mistakes are chances to be creative.

When bringing in other classes make sure they know what good audience behavior is This is especially important if the visiting audience may have behavior difficulties. It is important to discuss good audience behaviors such as being quiet, applauding, or not making fun of mistakes.

You may wish to abbreviate this entire sequence. The sequence outlined usually takes from 3-5 sessions, from first introducing scripts through final presentation. Later, as a routine sets in, your students can prepare short skits in a single session. The next day allow a brief run through first; then ask students to present.

Celebrate your first *production* with a cast party following presentation ...they will probably need to release their energy. Ask other adult observers to share their opinions with the class.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON DIRECTING

Becoming a director is not always easy but the challenge can be rewarding. Remember you are in charge! Directing is not a democratic process if the preparation for performance is to flow smoothly. This does not rule out soliciting suggestions from your crew. However, you are not on a debating circuit either. Make quick decisions. When unsure, try several different approaches and then choose what seems most workable.

Here are some management practices you may want to consider for either short or multiple scene skit work. These have to do with establishing clear expectations for your class and subsequent dramatic efforts.

ESTABLISH A GRADING PATTERN THAT SUPPORTS YOUR EFFORTS

For example,you may decide that grades are based on a combination of attendance and effort shown. One could lose his part if he misses more than ___day(s) of skit preparation or a single dress rehearsal. Tardiness can also be a factor.

Be prepared to substitute yourself or others.

Additionally, one may earn an A grade by cooperating and trying hard. This means that no disciplinary action is taken. Older participants can be asked to stay in character. Stepping out of character once or twice reduces the grade to a B.

USE A "GREEN ROOM" TO CONTROL OFF-STAGE BEHAVIOR

A Green Room is where actors wait to come on stage. This is very important when you have multiple scene skits and students waiting for their part. They were told to wait and read their scripts silently to themselves or watch the skit while in the Green Room (a small cluster of desks off the stage area).

Students who are found talking to one another could be moved to the "Pink Room". Students in the pink room can begin copying dictionary pages or their script while waiting to come on. Students would not have to go to the pink room too often before deciding to stay in the green room. Refusal to follow directions results in removal from the skit.

ADAPT THE SCRIPT TO MEET YOUR NEEDS...NO SCRIPT IS SACRED

[I cannot believe I wrote those lines as a playwright...but I did!] Consider adding things to your script that will give it more vitalilty--particularly on short scenes or skits. This can be done by introducing some "stage business" in other characters. Suppose one is directing a family conflict. While the mother and daughter have their argument, perhaps a sister making faces as her beleagured sister can be introduced.

One example is to add improvised scenes before a skit opens. Consider a skit where a young man must call his employer to tell him he can't make it to work. To show anxiety before the skit opened, we could ask the young man to pace and look at his watch. Then he must begin to dial several times but quit during each dialing. Finally, he could take a deep breath, stare at his watch and dial.

Be prepared to rewrite or alter the lines or characters as you see fit. [My word processor and copyright seal just kicked me]. In an all male institution we left the parts "as is" and still cast female roles with male falsettos. The effect was funny, effective and simple.

BEGINNING CHARACTER AND PLOT ANALYSIS

More experienced actors and actresses should be expected to demonstrate an empathy for their characters. This means students should be able to explore why their characters act the way they do. Begin by working with scripts about problems your students face.

One might end the first reading of the script by involving the studentss imagnation. Ask them questions like:

"What do you think that person was like before the skit opened?
Was the person a loner, shy, confident, cocky, very social, liked school etc? What was their family like?
Did they move a lot? Did he/she like their parents? brothers/sisters?
Did they grow up doing lots of family things or doing things mostly with their friends?"

Next, try to develop rapport with the script by linking the script action to someone's personal experiences. Ask questions like:

"Who likes who in this script? Why? What do you like about them?
Describe a friend you have or a person you know (without names) that fits the script...

Finally, focus on particular character actions and motivations. Ask questions like:

"Why does _____(character) do _____to _____?"
How else could this have been handled? How would you have handled this?
Why didn't our character do this?

In the next section on directing longer, multi-scene skits you will find a worksheet sample that takes advantage of this approach as a written lesson. Group discussions along these lines are very useful in developing understanding of the play.

When dealing with longer scripts it is useful to do some planning before tackling the complexity of a multi-scene script. You can prepare yourself by answering questions from the follwoing list:

1) List the characters and their basic personality types.
2) Describe the goal or conflict of each character.
3) List the steps that lead up to the conflict for the main characters. These are known as beats. It helps you see scenes broken into parts this way, just as you break down any lesson.
4) Describe how each character might walk, move, gesture, and talk to reveal the personality they have undertaken. Picture this in terms of everyday situations: Being in class, going shopping, at home.
5) Devise an initial setting or acting area. Mark out a minimum area of the front and back of the playing are, and exit or entrance points--where others will rehearse or wait their turn.
6) Devise a list of props or costumes that might be useful. When props, makeup, hats, etc. are added in dress rehearsal, you will see a marked increase in the acting energy.

In the next section you will find suggestions for multiple scene skits.There is a worksheet used for one skit that further illustrates these kinds of questions about character and plot.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR PERFORMANCE JITTERS

FIRST, REALIZE THAT EVERYONE HAS JITTERS, INCLUDING THE TEACHER. Next you should begin to prepare your students to handle this stress. The following methods have been used and work well:

1)When you recruit your class or introduce the project be sure to discuss the performance possibilities right away.

2)Begin with a videotape of the performance. Show this after doing your first skit. Invite others in to view it. This gets people used to an audience.

3)Conduct dress rehearsals in front of others...even if it is just other class mates. Add another outside person or two.

4)Talk to the cast a few days before the performance about "nervousness as a normal reaction". If possible invite in a drama student or instructor who will discuss how they handle this stress.
(e.g., Looking at back row audience members versus not looking at anyone, relaxation exercises, and theatre game warm-ups. The pride in looking back at having taken a challenge.)

DIRECTING LONGER, MULTIPLE SCENE SCRIPTS

In longer and more challenging works, you may wish to consider these additional factors as you plan your work. Scripts with multiple scenes require some thought on managing a large group to keep everyone involved. You may first want to look over the script and plan out a rudimentary stage area, props, then pick out certain scenes and lines that require special emphasis. Often you will discover the parts you want to emphasize as you direct the skit later.

Typically, the directing related to movement, gesture, exits and entrances requires more effort and time. Each student should have a script and write notes on it as you direct. These include changes or cuts in dialogue, where to stand, props,and lines to emphasize. At the same time you need to develop a production book which is your script with all the notes on it.

Longer skits require more rehearsal as you spread yourself across more actors and scenes. Here are some management practices to consider:

CASTING

Begin with students reading the material out loud--taking turns. This can be considered a "cold reading" or audition.You can cast them based on ability to read or understand the plot. Sometimes scripts can be made available for outside study. This helps to identify the motivated students prior to this casting.

MULTI-TASKING

When working with several scenes at once the goal is to have everyone busy...multiple tasks. You can achieve this in a variety of ways when you cast and direct:

CO-DIRECTING

Team up with another teacher (drama teacher or volunteer?). Then divide up the crew so that you co-direct. Usually, one person does the main scene and the co-director watches. The next day the co-directer re-rehearses that scene again to make it fresh. The third day you switch back and a new scene is attempted. Another related option is to assign an advanced student or volunteer to "Assistant Director"

MULTI-CASTING

Cast your main characters who appear in most scenes. Then double cast back-ups. Begin work on scene 1 and the leads. Those in scene 2 work on their own with the back-up leads so the scene can be rehearsed. I have even seen some directors simply recast each scene with new people so everyone participates and all scenes can be rehearsed simultaneously. This is a bit confusing when the audience sees the same character portrayed by various individuals.

LENGTH OF PRODUCTION AND VARYING THE ROUTINE...

Another concern is the endurance of your crew. Students involved in recreational drama are often at an exploratory stage. Their sense of committment to the art form is undeveloped. Their joy, enthusiasm and discovery will become most intense when involved in short term experiences. We can link several of these experiences or rehearsals together in order to arrive at a dramatic performance goal.

Therefore, one should not test the attention span of the crew by scheduling 2 weeks of daily rehearsal. Instead, break this up with classroom work that supports the script preparation. To do this I use worksheets as written assignments. This keeps the students hungry for dramatic exercises and rehearsals.

Here is an example based on a 2 week rehearsal schedule for the play Too Pretty by Julie Nieve. The plot concerns Lacey. She is new in school and very attractive. She wants to make friends. Her mother encourages her to use her looks. When she goes to join the physics club the science teacher is astounded that a "cheerleader type" wants in. Her first friends are the "belles," a social group at the school. The belles are led by Barb. They want Lacey to go out with the Big Man On Campus: Drake. Lacey becomes increasingly interested in "wierd Walt" the book worm. At the end they share their experiences of feeling different and being judged for having different interests.

On the next page is a sample of the worksheet used between rehearsal days. We rehearsed this skit about 3 days a week and were able to present at the end of the second week. This worksheet can be finished and discussed in one day.

You can even use the worksheet as a basis for theatre games. Ask students to portray their answers....to show first...and then read the answers.

Another nice touch for breaking up the rehearsal is to visit a community or college play production. See if you can do any of the following:

1. Visit a rehearsal. Point out the seriousness of actors while on and off stage.
2. Interview an actor in class and discuss the amount of work that goes into a play. Find out why they like working this hard. Discuss being nervous.
3. Visit the stage crew and look at lighting, costumes,and stagecrafts.
4. See if students can visit a green room and make-up rooms. Then try to arrange for a time when students can be "made up" to look older, sicker, hairier, etc.
5. Visit a technical or dress rehearsal. See an actual performance.

WORKSHEET: TOO PRETTY from READ MAGAZINE STUDENT_____

Directions: As an actor you must think about your character. Follow the directions below.

(1)Matching: Match the words that best describes the character below:

LACEY___	A. KIND OF LOUD. BRAGS A LOT. HE SWAGGERS WHEN HE WALKS.
BARB___	B. VERY TALKATIVE, ALWAYS LOOKING IN A MIRROR, HYPER.
WIERD WALT__	C .ALWAYS CARRIES A BOOK ON COMPUTERS, SHY.
DRAKE___	D. VERY PRETTY, BUT SMART TOO. FEELS UNSURE. TALKS SLOWLY AND THOUGHTFULLY.

(2)Pick a character you are playing. Below answer questions about this character. Use examples in complete sentences to make your point:

NAME OF CHARACTER IS_____ NICKNAME COULD BE_____

PRETEND YOU SAW THIS PERSON AT A DISTANCE. HOW WOULD YOU KNOW HIM/HER BY THE WAY THEY WALK OR MOVE. DESCRIBE HOW THEY WALK OR MOVE:

_____

WHAT TYPE OF CLOTHES DOES THIS PERSON WEAR. INCLUDE JEWELRY OR ANYTHING ELSE HE/SHE MIGHT CARRY:

_____

SUPPOSE YOUR CHARACTER WAS SENT TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. WHAT WOULD BE THE FIRST THING THAT WOULD COME TO HIS/HER MIND?

_____

DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENS AT HOME? HOW IS THIS PERSON TREATED?

_____

HOW WOULD THIS PERSON TREAT SOMEONE LIKE "WIERD WALT"...SOMEONE WHO WAS NOT VERY POPULAR?

_____

(3)Pretend you were watching a movie of this play. Now you are going to describe things about this movie. Describe what the actors did in the movie to show what they do below:

WHAT DOES BARB DO IN FRONT OF A MIRROR OR REFLECTING GLASS WHEN SHE PASSES BY?

_____

LACEY LOSES HER TEMPER SOMETIMES. HOW DOES SHE SHOW IT?

_____

WHAT MAKES LACEY ANGRY?

_____

DOES LACEY'S MOM UNDERSTAND HER? GIVE AN EXAMPLE THAT PROVES YOUR POINT:

_____

WHERE DO YOU THINK WALT SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME?

_____

HOW DOES DRAKE SPEND HIS TIME AWAY FROM SCHOOL?

_____

PROGRAM STEP 3: IMPROVISATION

INTRODUCTION

Improvisation requires that people create their dramatic structure on the spot. The short skits are usually taught first because many of the author's students require a model or experience of the structure before attempting to create their own improvised drama. However, necessity is the best teacher. Once, without access to scripts, we did improvisation first. We found the results very enjoyable. Improvisation is one of the best tools for teaching spontaneity. And the abilty to think and problem solve spontaneously is invaluable.

Improvisation will bedescribed in terms of structure and then a series of improvisation ideas will be presented. In structured form, one begins with non-verbal improvs so that students can concentrateon their movement, body language and showing. These non-verbal improvs are very similar to theatre games. Later, words or dialogue are introduced.

Improvisation can also be used in a structured way for teaching specific social skills. One example of this is "social skills training" which has been used with a variety of special and non-special, public education and incarcerated youth. It is used to teach adaptive behaviors through modelling and practicing pro-social behavior in improvised events.A sample of this format is included at the section following this one.

Finally, from a theatrical point of view, one can enhance script work by adding improvisation. Many short written skits are polished by adding an improvisation scene prior to the first scene so that the "stage is set and characters established." A sample of this is also included in this section. Improvisation is also an excellent source of play or script development.

DRAMATIC STRUCTURE USED IN IMPROVISATIONS

MOVE FROM NON-VERBAL TO VERBAL

Begin with non-verbal exercises. This forces students to "show" rather than "tell". If dialogue is used too early, the tendency is to "tell how characters feel," or rather than acting it out. (For example, a student says, "Boy, am I angry," rather than salivate and look around)

MOVE FROM CONCRETE TO ABSTRACT

One should also begin with very concrete situations. Examples used in the past include improvising a home chore. Typically a problem is solved while doing the chore. For example, a vacuum cleaner breaks down. Later, one can add more abstract situations such as a leaf not wanting to abandon a tree in the Autumn.

IMPROVISATIONS ARE MORE COMPLETE STORIES THAN GAMES

Unlike previous theatre *games*, improvisations require a beginning, middle and end. When a problem that is solved, a story is the result. Then the game crosses over into being a small skit or improvisation as defined here. This distinction is not critical as long as you feel progress is being made in the ability of your student's to "show" or act out a complete story.

THE STRUCTURE REMAINS CONSISTENT

It is useful to have the class think in terms of dramatic structure. Therefore, a dramatic structure similar to theatre games is used. The major difference is that an ending is used. One example is from the improvisation called TARDY-TARDY as illustrated below:

Title: This is optional and can be left to students.

Focus: One defines a problem. Examples might be--
What excuses do you use when you are tardy?
How can our reaction to making the excuse determine whether we will get in trouble or not?

Situation: Unlike games, these directions are not presented as rules. Rather, the situation describes the conditions for action or dramatic sequence.

Who.....There are 2 students. One is always praised by the teacher while the other is always in trouble.

Where.....Both students have just come late to class by 5 minutes. (You can add detail about classroom and room arrangements).

What.....Both students are asked by the teacher to accountfor their time, give an excuse. ***Show*** us how the students react differently.

Ending: There must be an ending or resolution. These options can include:

1) A new person can enter or a person can exit to change the situation.
(The principal enters, or the student goes to the principal's office)

2) A new topic is begun.This implies avoiding the conflict.
(This topic begins a discussion of other problems, future events, etc.)

3)The problem is solved. People compromise, change their attitude, etc.
(The teacher and student agree to after school make-up, somebody introduces humor to show a changed attitude. [see Student Skit in the playwriting section]

EMPHASIZE *SHOWING*...NOT TELLING!

Notice that under Situation the last direction is to SHOW rather than tell. Showing means to demonstrate feelings, thoughts, and relationships through words and action. The "good student" demonstrates better posture, uses polite language, and makes an apology. The "bad student" often reveals this by being slovenly, walk with defiance, answer tersely or challenge the teacher for even inquiring.

Use side-coaching actively to encourage students to stay in character, to show and not tell, to keep the skit moving, and to let them know when time is up. Make sure everyone understands your increased side-coaching goals or they may misinterpret this as increased criticism. At the same time increase the amount of praise in side-coaching or during debriefing.

ESTABLISH THE PLACE...WHERE

It is important that actors convey the real space they want the veiwer to imagine. The actors must show an awareness of set boundary, set scenery, temperature, furniture, noises, etc.

Various activities could be used prior to improvisation to help the students visualize the setting. For example, ask students to draw a set lay-out prior to the improvisation. Then make a game where they must move about their imaginary set using different objects while viewers guess the setting.

CHARACTER RULE...."Maitain Concentration And Quality Of Effort"

No joking is allowed and students must concentrate. They must keep the skit going and not return to their normal student roles. If this happens, they should be requested to start over.

Finally, at the end one can debrief. Questions can now center on the acting quality with questions such as:

-Did they convince us they were the people? How?
-Did they convince us of the setting? How?
-Did you believe they had a problem? Why?
-Did they show or tell us about the skit?
-Did the improvisation have an ending?
-What did you like best? What else could be done?*Show* how you would do it differently.

ALLOW NEW GROUPS TO PRACTICE THEIR PRESENTATION

If this is their first attempt at improvising, always define the situation or problem clearly. With my students I not only define the problem but also the entire situation. I might even ask them to brainstorm or disucss various solutions or depictions of the problem.

Then I allow students to work on each skit before presentation. This is usually done in small groups. The activity often has a 5 minute time limit to:

1) Discuss the action line and ending
2) Discuss the parts and assign them.
2) Complete one or two practices before presenting.

Later, this sequence can be simplified. After students feel comfortable with improvisation try eliminating step 3) from above. Once students have worked together and can anticipate and create, try skipping all 3 steps. Simple suggest the problem and see what they can come up with.

IMPROVISATION: NON-VERBAL EXERCISES

(PANTOMIME)

DEFINE THE SITUATION CLEARLY. USE CONCRETE TOPICS. LET STUDENTS FIRST PRACTICE THEIR STORY BEFORE SHOWING IT.

TITLE: CHORES

FOCUS: What chores do you do at home? Describe in detail how you carry them out.

SITUATION:

What and where.
Show us a chore you do, without speaking.
Think where it takes place, indoors, outdoors or both.
If you wear certain clothes, put them on first.
If you get hot or wet or cold, show that too.
Complete the chore or continue until we guess what you are doing.

Sidecoach- Remind students where the edges of the stage are.
Ask them to show any clothing, environmental cues, etc.
Show us the drawers.
Is the water hot or cold? Is it raining outside?
Do you wear a hat? Don't put your hand through the bag.(boundary situation)

Debrief-Was it believable?
What was your best clue to what the chore was?
How could the chore be done differently? Show us...
(ask others to show alternate version).
How could he/she show more detail when doing...?
Would you like to try it again?

Note- One must stress the WHERE in this improvisation and give details of WHAT is being done. Later improvisations will have fewer notes on debrief. This first one is given in greatest detail.

Next ask that the chore be done next with a problem in the middle. For example, the rake breaks in the middle, or the phone rings, or time is a factor. In this way one can bridge from game formats to improvisation formats.

TITLE: TAKE IT OFF

FOCUS: What are some different kinds of clothes you wear for school, hiking, working, sleeping, etc.?

SITUATION:

What and where.
You have just come home...or you just woke up.
You are going to change your clothes or get dressed to do something different.
We have to guess what clothing you are putting on.
If you come home tired, show this.
If you wake up groggy, show us.

Variations

Who--emphasis

Choose clothing for specific occupations that people draw out of a hat. (chef, welder, nurse, policeman/woman, teacher, coach, scuba diver, etc.)

Transition--emphasis

You have just come from somewhere and now you must change to go to another place...requiring different clothes. Be sure to show your physical condition (tired, sweaty, dreamy, agitated etc). Show how your attitude changes as you put on different clothes.

TITLE: DR. NEEDLE

FOCUS: We all have needles. What are the different ways people use needles? (sewing,repair, surgery, removal of splinter, pop balloon, etc.)

SITUATION:

You may work in teams of 2 or 3.
You have a problem than can only be solved by using a needle.
You have a needle.
Show us what you will do with it.
Show us what, where, who.
We'll try to guess what your problem was at the end.

Debrief:- Could you see the needle?
Did it look sharp?
How did you know what they were doing with the needle?
How did you know where they were? ...who they were?

TITLE: ELEVATOR

FOCUS: What is the largest elevator you went on? How high did it go? What happens when an elevator gets stuck? What would people do?

SITUATION:

Who--You are with 3 other strangers in a small elevator.
Where --There probably is a hatch at the top, a phone.
What--Suddenly the elevator stops. What will you do?
Show us without words.
Show us from the beginning when you get on the elevator.
Remember you must show...without words. You can have silent conversations.

TITLE: NO-WORD SHORT-STORIES

FOCUS: Discuss how commercials on tv are visual, short, make a point.
Discuss how to make a short skit. Take any of the suggested topics below and illustrate one...or write them on a board.

SITUATION:

Ice cube just born in a freezer, gets put in a drink and begins melting.
A chair bought by a huge person, gets it home, then breaks.
A leaf begins to shiver in fall, finally the tree lets go, but the leaf isn't ready yet.
A young bird becomes terrified by a cat. It must now fly for the first time to get away.
An old car is getting an overhaul and being made to feel younger.
For those who want, they may introduce some talking, but keep to a minimum.

TITLE: SAFETY SAVES

FOCUS: Visit a place where safety is important (shops, kitchens, etc.).
Ask students to notice the safety posters (bring some back with you).
Ask for a safety demonstration by the instructor or employer.

SITUATION:

Students will demonstrate an unsafe act leading to an accident.
The other students will try to guess the safety rule.
When students knows the rule they--do not say it out loud.Instead they go up and act out the correct safety procedure (If they know it...Otherwise they tell it and then demonstrate another unsafe act ... try to use as few words as possible)

Sidecoach- Show us the size of the machine, how heavy is the tool,
how do you hold it, Show the weight or texture of the materials you are using

TITLE: COMMERCIAL NONSENSE

FOCUS: Talk about commercials that use a lot of words and ones that don't.

Define Gibberish--sounds we make that sound like speech, but are just made up of words, like a foreign language. Have you ever tried to understand someone by watching their voice and body...someone speaking another language.

Group exercises--Say "thank you" with different intonations (anger, sincerely, I'll get you back later, sweetly, humorously)

SITUATION:

You will put on a commercial with a friend.
The product will be your friend.
This could be a machine, a model for clothing, interview for a product.
You cannot use English, you must use Gibberish.
You will guess what the product is.

Note-Teacher should demonstrate this first to set idea. One can work in pairs or alone with made up or real product.

Variations- People can pretend to do this in a foreign tongue...making it up. It is useful to illustrate this also.

TITLE: ANIMAL CRACKERS

FOCUS: When was the last time you went to the zoo (or farm)?
How do the following animals move?
-lion -turtle -bird -duck -monkey -snake -elephant -etc.

Suppose you were watching the animals from afar...and you could see them move.
How would you describe these animals and their movements to a small child who had never seen the animals?

SITUATION:

You will form a small band of animals. The animals are hungry, sleepy or full of fleas.
Show us what they do to solve their problem.

Variations- Add emotions to the animals:
(angry lion, terrified turtle, daffy, silly duck, timid bird, etc.).
Next, add animal sounds.
Ask the animals to interact: hunting, playing, sleeping, cleaning

TITLE: A REAL LEMON

FOCUS: How do you start a car? What do you do when it won't start?

SITUATION:

You are are in a hurry
You are driving someone and you are late, etc.
You go out to start your car: (any)
__it is a new car__it doesn't start well__you forget things
Show us what you will do--what happens.

Note- You may want to save this for the end when words can be added. This makes a nice transition to improvs with words. You may have to sidecoach regarding an ending.

Debrief- How did you know the car was not working?
How did the actor show he was late or in a hurry?
What was most believable?
How would you do it differently? (show us)

IMPROVISATIONS WITH WORDS

AS A TRANSITION, ONE MIGHT EXPLORE DOING THE PREVIOUS NON-VERBAL IMPROVISATIONS, BUT THIS TIME, ADDING WORDS. NOTE, THAT THIS SECTION ON *IMPROVISATIONS WITH WORDS* GIVE FEWER DESCRIPTIVE DETAILS IN THE SITUATION PART. THIS ENCOURAGES GREATER EXPERIMENTATION OR IMAGINATION ON THE PART OF STUDENTS.

TITLE: RESTAURANT NONSENSE (emphasizes *showing* physicallizing)

FOCUS: How does a fancy restaurant differ from a cheap one?

SITUATION:

You are with a date in a fancy restaurant.
The waiter is trying to get your order. The waiter only speaks French-Gibberish or Made-up-French (or other language).
Funny things can happen when you say one thing and the waiter brings another.

Variation- The waiter uses sign language.

TITLE: DATING GAME (emphasizes endings)

FOCUS: What was it like when you asked someone for your first date? Nervous? Did anyone coach you? Did anything go wrong?

SITUATION:

One young man (or woman) is trying to get up the nerve to call a young woman. His buddy is coaching him on what to say. Finally the young man gets up the courage to call. To his surprise the young woman eagerly accepts the date....

Later during the conversation he finally calls her by name...and realizes it's the wrong person!

TITLE: TARDY AGAIN! (emphasizes character)

FOCUS: Some students try hard to please their teachers and some do the opposite.
How can you tell these students apart?
How do they act differently?

SITUATION:
A teacher has just started the lesson...when in walks 2 students. One is the type who always pleases the teacher. The other is the type who enjoys not pleasing teachers or feels picked on. Show us what happens after they walk in.

Debrief- What type of student are you?
Are most of us able to only act one way or can we act in other ways?
Do you act differently for different teachers?
Which way would you want to act for a boss?
Which way makes your life easier?
What was done by each person that let you know right away which type of character he/she was?

TITLE: A REAL HOT MACHINE (emphasizes humor)

FOCUS: How many of you want a car? Anyone ever look for a car before?

SITUATION:
You are looking at a 10 year old car. It is your first. You are very excited.

The salesperson is really slimy.

Every time you try something like a horn, door, window, the item does not work or falls off in your hand. The salesperson quickly gets your attention to some other "fine detail" of the car.

Note: Talk about the role of humor in understanding.

TITLE: YOUR IN-LAWS

FOCUS: How do comedians represent in-laws? (Or what is an in-law?) (or bring in columns from Dear Abby about in-laws and discuss).

Discuss how visiting a close friend's (or spouse's) family can sometimes cause tension in a relationship.

SITUATION:

A young married couple is going to visit their in-laws for the first time. Both are nervous.
They are driving in a car when it breaks down. There is a phone booth nearby. The driver gets out and makes a call.
The mechanic says that he/she cannot come for 2-4 hours. The husband and wife get mad. Show how they handle this problem.

Variation- Leave out the mechanic. The phone caller must what is being said between the caller and mechanic. The caller can add humor by yelling into the phone, etc...

TITLE: GOING IN STYLE

FOCUS: Have you ever gone to a fancy party or dinner? What did you wear or buy to wear? Did you every buy anything a salesperson said would look good on you and later you realized it was ridiculous?

SITUATION:

A person has been invited to a fancy event.

The person is now shopping for clothes.
Our person is nervous because he/she is unsure what to wear.

The salesperson is trying to sell the latest, most extreme fashion to the shopper. (This fashion could be discussed first.)

The salesperson finally convinces the person to try it on.
The shopper looks ridiculous, even to the salesperson, but the salesperson convinces him/her to buy it.

Sidecoach- Show us the clothing. Show us the special features like pockets, extra material, etc.

Note- Salesperson can wince at the color, or smile to self about the looks or even talk to the audience about the way it really looks.

Debrief:

What made you believe the clothing was extreme?
How did you know what the salesman thought?
How was the salesperson convincing?
Did you get a picture in your mind of the clothing? Describe it.

TITLE: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH JELLO

FOCUS: Ever want to travel to outer space? What would it be like if you landed on a planet where people were made of stone? watery like jelly fish? How big would they be? How would you approach them?

SITUATION:

You are landing on a new planet.
Everyone is nervous
After the bumpy landing you get out and explore.
Finally after thinking the planet is empty you discover small people made of raspberry jello.
Make us believe this trip happens and that you meet raspberry jello people.

Sidecoach-Don't step through the cockpit, use the door (when exiting).
Show us how you discover they are made of raspberry jello (lick or taste them).

Debrief:-How is fantasy different from other types of improvisation?
How is fantasy like a theatre game?
What makes it real? (concentration).

TITLE: DISABILITIES AND ABILITIES

FOCUS: What's it like to be left out of things?
Does anyone know a person in their family or neighborhood with a disability?
How do you include them in your gatherings?
Discuss some handicapped people famous for their accomplishments.
Discuss the different conditions for physical disabilities, blindness, and speech impairments. (Give examples of the disability and ask how people might adapt)

SITUATIONS:

1) A group of people are choosing sides for a softball team. One person has brought her cousin who is in a wheelchair. Show what will happen.

2) A couple of students are going house to house selling tickets for a fund raiser. The next door is opened by Debbie who is blind.

3) Students have to give a speech/description about a job they want to have someday. David has a speech impediment. Assume David were giving this speech. Show how he might make himself more understandable. What might he do differently to make his speech understood? He has difficulty remembering things due to a learning disability. How can you help when he asks to play?

INVENTING YOUR OWN IMPROVISATIONS

Improvisations can be easily repeated since every attempt can have a new ending. When repeating you can allow less time for exploration and practice unless the group requests it.

Finally, consider the students creating their own improvisations. Give them a form with Title...Focus...Situation on it. Ask each student (or small groups) to invent and and later present an improvisation . Later, they can invent and put the written imrprovisations into a hat for random, spontaneous selection. Point out that sometimes improvisations don't work because they are not fully described, or simply hard to do.

USING IMPROVISATION WITH SKIT WORK

BASED ON THE SKIT "THREE'S A CROWD" in *SHARING AN APARTMENT*. Durlynn Anema. Janus Book Publishers.1981.

THE FOLLOWING SHOWS HOW IMPROVISATION WAS ADDED TO A SKIT IN A PLAYBOOK. THIS LENGTHENED THE PLAY, ADAPTED IT TO OUR SETTING AND IMPROVED IT'S DRAMATIC IMPACT.

ORIGINAL-SITUATION IN SKIT (Background)

Kevin and his friends wish they had their own place. Kevin finally find a place and takes his two friends to see it. Mrs Garcia, the landlady, lets them move in right away.

They sign a lease without thinking ahead. They find out they have 2 bedrooms and 3 people...each person wants his own room.

ADAPTION WITH IMPROVISATION

This skit was practiced by students residing in a state institution for incarcerated males. At the institution the students live in supervised cottages. A major pre-occupation is what one will do when they are released...where they will live.

We added a front scene improvised with an additional situation:

1) Kevin is sitting in the cottage reading the newspaper.

2) His friends are talking about the sports and comics when they realize Kevin is reading the Rental section of the newspaper.

3) They tease Kevin about this until they find out his release date is coming up.

4) Then they begin discussing living together...and what it could be like.

5) A narrator tells the audience that 3 months after Kevin was released his other friends Tony and Raul begin to make plans with their counselors to live with Kevin. They called him up. Kevin has finally found a possible place. They arrange for a weekend visit to see the place with Kevin.

6) Next they are in the apartment looking it over. (This gives practice in similar exercises to establishing the set location. They must open pretend doors, try out beds, appliances etc)

7) Kevin explains that the Landlady wants them to sign the lease soon or she will rent it out. They decide to go and talk to her.

...FADE INTO BEGINNING OF DIALOGUE WITH MRS. GARCIA.

USING SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR DAILY LIVING

This is an approach towards teaching basic communication, interpersonal, and self-managment skills using what might be termed "coaching". It employs structured role play and feedback. Topics are as varied as the the student's needs though certain units seem to be more prevalent than others.

The key to the success is the model for teaching new behaviors. These programs are often begun with junior high school students which is why many of the skills are so basic. However, several more sophisticated programs have been successfully developed for secondary school youth, particularly with incarcerated youth.

What follows is a general description followed by a general model for this activity. To illustrate the concept this section will include one skill described in detail followed by several skills in outline form at the end.

Various terms have been used to describe this curricular approach. Some of the terms the author is familiar with include: social skills training, video drama, structured learning. Some of the skills that can be found are:

- Giving and receiving compliments
- Active listening
- Self Control/ Anger management
- Introducing yourself
- Avoiding trouble by saying, "No!" (peer to peer)
- Starting and maintaing a conversation
- Negotiation
- Asking for a job
- Ignoring teasing.

Some practitioners rely on a strict behavior model. In *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* by Arnold P. Goldstein et. al., we find a very structured approach built around a research model. This involves formatted lessons, charting behavior and change. Some programs spell out exactly how to deliver instruction and others are quite general. Some trainers rely more heavily on improvisation and spontaneity than others.

It appears that often skill trainers find the group is excited and pleased with their role playing. Then the lessons run out. Other times I have heard trainers suggest that drama would help extend the group or individual effort. At the same time, people pursuing recreational/drama goals can now see clearly how improvisational activities can be structured to change behavior.

It has long been noted that many skills are effectively taught via role playing. The better the role play qualilty, the better the lesson. Hopefully ideas in this text and methods found in social skills training can build towards complementary outcomes.

THE BASIC MODEL FOR SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING

The basic model takes components from direct instruction. This is teaching based on behavioral principles applied with modelling, coaching and drama therapy techniques. Students often practice a skill first with "shadows" who guide the participant in recalling the steps in each social skill.The teacher will usually follow these steps:

REFUSAL SKILL: Avoiding Trouble By Saying "NO to your friends"

1) Introductory discussion of the skill.

Discuss a typical problem faced by the participants. This is a problem when they get into trouble due to peer pressure (being afraid to say "NO" to trouble.
Why use this skill ? Where or When can one use it?

Examples:

- How did you get into the kind of trouble that got you suspended?
- How did your friends talk you into it?
- Wouldn't you like to stay out of trouble and still keep your friends?

2)Description of the main steps

This can be illustrated or discussed. The following are general steps illustrate the refusal skill example:

Situation: Your friend asks you to go to the story to get some food. You both know you have no money. Your friend says that this won't be a problem.

STEP 1) Gather information.

- Ask your friend what is going to happen.

(e.g.: How can we get food if we don't have any money?)

STEP 2) Name the trouble.

Use a legal name if it involves breaking the law. (theft, robbery, shoplifting.)

STEP 3) List the consequences for yourself.

- Be specific and graphic. *Make it personal.*

(e.g.: I got caught last time. I'm on probation. If I get caught it won't be so easy. Besides, my father said I would have to go live with my mother if that happened. I want to stay around here.)

STEP 4) Suggest Alternatives

- The goal is to get the group to start some other activity
- Make this convincing by using body language.
- Suggest another activity and then leave/exit.

(e.g.: If you guys are hungry I got some stuff at my house. Come on over and I'll fix you something. Begin to walk off.)

STEP 5) Leave

- If they won't go then leave, so you won't be talked into trouble.

But invite them over if they change their mind.

INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT

The steps described above seem logical and perhaps detailed. Therefore, the skill is next practiced on a continuum. It begins with a list of the steps where everyone can see it. People practice it together. The first person tries to get the steps down. The second person acts as the adversary. The teacher is the coach. The coach helps the first person. If that person gets stuck, the coach will feed the person lines. Often this coach is a trained teacher aide or volunteer. The goal is not to embarrass but to encourage mastery.

Often the teacher demonstrates the steps with the aide. Then students are asked in a larger group to supply answers or examples for each step. Finally, they go off and practice in trios.

After initial practice, the students videotape their performance. The purpose of the videotaping is twofold. First, the student can see how he is doing. The critique stems not from what is wrong but what could be added. It also recognizes what was done correctly. Secondly, the student sees him/herself performing the task and this encourages self-confidence in using the skill in the real world.

Practicing in the real world is the next logical step. Before doing this the instructor might introduce more difficult situations. In the Refusal Skill this might include situations where the person is confronted by a group of people who want to get into "trouble;" he/she is the only one trying to refuse peer pressure. The person is shown how to break down the group by taking the leader aside and talking privately...rather than getting into a group harangue. Another situation would involve name calling and challenges. Again, the camera is turned on.

In one program the setting is then changed. It is moved out of the classroom into realistic settings. It might be behind the back stop where people are smoking cigarettes. Another instance could involve acting it out in front of a store that is being considered for shoplifting. By changing to realistic settings with the camera rolling the skill increases in transference. Finally, students are asked to create a log or diary of their usage of the skill and report back to the class.

Some programs strive for maximum accountability. This might include pretests based on teacher observation or student demonstration. Others use checklists for each skill where the steps are inventoried. Others post-test with observations again made by teachers.

At this point in the program the instructor often entertains variations and new topics. The group is now empowered to believe they can master a new skill. It is at this point that some groups have gone off and made videotapes on the steps in the skill for teaching others. Playwriting, scene work, other dramatic activities cannot be far off.

In summary, the model involves discussion, role-play and practice of pre-defined steps, feedback through videotaping and increasing the difficulty and realism by changing content and setting. It can be reduced to show, practice, coaching.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER SOCIAL SKILLS

Below are other sample skill units, and the general steps used in training for each skill.

STARTING A CONVERSATION

1) CHOOSE THE RIGHT TIME AND PLACE

2) GREET THE OTHER PERSON
- Say "hi", shake hands

3) MAKE SMALL TALK
- This would make a good theatre game alone..

4) DECIDE IF THE OTHER PERSON IS LISTENING
- Watch body language
(nodding, eye contact, verbal "uh-huh's)
- A game could be built simply around body language

5) BRING UP A MAIN TOPIC THAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU
- Ask questions or make comments

ASKING FOR HELP

1) DECIDE WHAT THE PROBLEM IS
- Be specific: who, what are contributing to the problem
- How do you feel inside?

2) DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO GET HELP
- Ask yourself, "Have I ever done this before?"
- "Do I want to try and solve it...accept the challenge"

3) THINK OF PEOPLE WHO COULD HELP YOU
- Identify someone by name

4) ASK ONE PERSON...STATE THE PROBLEM AND THE KIND OF HELP YOU WANT

NEGOTIATING A COMPROMISE

1) LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE OTHER PERSON'S OPINION
- Listening is important to find a compromise

2) RE-STATE THE OTHER PERSON'S OPINION ACCURATELY

3) STATE YOUR OWN OPINION; THEN ASK THE PERSON WHAT HE/SHE THINKS
- The reason why...is because...

4) THINK OF A COMPROMISE AND SUGGEST IT
- Pick something where you must meet a condition to get what you want
(e.g.: If I don't come home on time I will be grounded for a week.)

SOME SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Your best resource is to first visit someone who is teaching skills in this manner. The next best reference is a book. Some of the best materials have been developed by teachers on special projects. Texts tend to be very dry and academic in their approach. The following materials are available:

Commercially Available Texts:

*Skillstreaming The Adolescent.*Arnold P. Goldstein,Robert P.Sprafkin, N. Jane Gershaw. Paul Klien.Research Press; 2621 N. Mattis, Champaign, IL 61820. 1980.

ASSET, A Social Skills Program for Adolescents. Hazel, Schumaker; Sherman, Sheldon-Wildegen. Research Press Co. 1981.

Let's Talk, Developing ProSocial Communication Skills. Wig, Elisabeth; Charles E. Merril Publishing Co. Columbus, Ohio.1982.

Teacher Created Materials-Limited Supply

PREP-A Social Skills Course for the Middle School. Gest, Bishop, Adamitz, Olson. Issaquah School District #411; 22211 S.E. 72nd St, Issaquah,WA 98027.

PASSAGES-A Social Skills Program for Adolescents. Romano, Joan M. Issaquah School District #411; 22211 S.E. 72nd St, Issaquah,WA 98027.

PLAYWRITING & SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Writing a play or skit can be fun for all. Effective writing is based on having a clear central character who is challenged by a clear problem. The playwright must then show us who is doing what, to whom, where and why. As the sequence unfolds we find other characters, objects or past secrets unfold to complicate and add suspense to the plot. Humor and realistic or poetic language makes us like the character. The central character is often opposed by a second set of characters or objects and is allied to a 3rd main character.

Pauline Peotter, a national playwriting judge for the American Theatre Association, is adamant on one premise: theatre is not real life, but a r-creation or adaptation. For example, time is different on stage. In one hour on stage, one can cover 30 minutes or several decades.

Dramatic writing has its own work discipline and set of principles. Real life dialogue is often pointless, repetitive and dull. It is the writer's objective to focus our attention and gain our interest in the unfolding conflict.

Pauline goes on to suggest the following typical reasons for failed scripts which applies to all dramatists, young and old. The common reasons are:

1)The writer is not writing from life experience or things really felt or understood. For young people most of their experiences will revolve around friends,family and school. Fantasy is possible too.

2)A basic conflict is lacking. The writer simply wants to tell a moral or make a point. The characters simply make statements. They do *not* **show** but instead just **tell** their story. Little action, little suspense, little conflict and consequently little interest in the characters is shown by the audience.

3)Most writers begin with stereotypic pictures of characters. They are one dimensional...usually all good, all bad, all funny, etc. As writers mature they tend to add more flesh to the bones.

4)Most people try to produce a play in a typewriter alone. Good pieces have to go through several stages. These often include:

a. Researching your characters, setting, topic.
(unless you are writing from first-hand experience)
b. Preparing by outlining your action and character changes.
c. Writing a first draft.
d. Working with actors or a production to see what works and what doesn't.
e. Rewriting and rewriting.

This sequence is often more demanding than many young writers are willing to put up with. However, they can write from experience and get others to present their piece. Writing based on improvising a "situation" is a common source of dramatic writing for many. Probably one rewrite is all we could reasonably expect from young people to begin with.

PLAYWRITING PRINCIPLES AND EXERCISES

DIALOGUE

Listen to people at a bus stop. The conversation is idle, repetitive small talk.

GUS:
Hey is that you ol' buddy...Bill Sherwin? How've ya been?

BILLY:
Fine, fine...And you?

GUS:
Allright I guess...can't complain I suppose. How're the kids?

BILLY:
Fine...You goin' out my way?

GUS:
Missed the damn bus.

In the hands of a dramatist this rather common language can become more interesting:

BILLY:
Gus, Gus Salomon...Right?!

GUS:
Yep...

BILLY:
You were the man with a 1000 jokes. Didja your miss your bus?

GUS:
I might as well have...I got to get back to the hub.

BILLY:
Getting ready to move?

GUS:
Move?! Are you kidding! I can't give that house away, let alone sell it...Say, weren't you looking to move back into the city?

BILLY:
Oh, there's number 45; I don't want to miss it. I'm going to head up one stop to so can I get a good seat. (exits)

GUS: *(to himself)*
Missed the bus all right....Missed a lot more.

In the second dialogue example there is a hidden tension that reveals itself. Gus is down and Billy's attempt to offer help ends up with Bill on the spot! This could have been a short improvisational exercise.

To help students understand this, have them tape record some everyday dialogue. Have the dialogue typed out.Then have the student invent a secret one person is hiding from the other...or some other concern. Erase the repeated phrases and cliches. Then add the hidden problem that reveals itself. Do this for about one page.

DRAMATIC CONFLICT AND STRUCTURE

Real life dialogue sounds so dull. Dramatic dialogue has conflict and dueling in much of it. Here are some other terms and writing principles concerning the identification and building of conflict:

INTENTION: There must be intent. The central character must have a goal.
(e.g., Young person wants to get car keys to go out on a date.)

OBSTACLE: An obstacle is any person or thing that gets in the way of the goal of our central characters. Obstacles come in 3 types:

a. People--His parents won't give him the keys since the speeding ticket
b. Psychological--Afraid to ask for keys since he has a failing school notice
c. Physical--No money for the gas or date even if he gets the keys

COMPLICATION: This helps to add suspense and furthers the conflict. It is also during times of complication that we learn the most about our character's past.

(e.g.: The young person was all ready on probation for the last speeding ticket or report card. He could get grounded for the latest experience. Should he risk getting found out by asking for the keys?

A dance has come up and he got asked by the one person he always wanted to go out, but was afraid to ask. In fact, she asked him!

A third character comes on board. A friend offers to lend the car if he helps him cheat on his history exam. Having been caught once, our central character doesn't want to get blamed again and risk never getting to use the car again.)

SOLUTION: These options are similar to the improvisation endings.

a. A Character Changes--A person overcomes his/her fear of asking someone for a date and then arranges to have a date where the car is not needed.

b. Something New Enters--He studies hard for the exam and turns down cutting school. The new exam means his grade will be passing.

Another variation involves helping a 4th character out.This 4th character was ostracized by the group (eg., complication?) When the 4th character returns a favor, the major character is then bailed out.

c. Exit situations - The exit usually lead into other scenes. Our character decides he will talk to his counselor and get some help on passing the failing classes he is .

A skit or scene typically has many such conflicts. Each "moment" or "beat" of conversation must have a dramatic intent. In good writing, each element of dialogue constitutes a mini-conflict, and the sum total of these dramatic sparrings completes a scene.

Consider the overall structure of a scene. The structure can follow the previous form in the improvisations by of having a:

BEGINNING.....We learn about the problem

MIDDLE.....A complication follows an initial attempt to solve problem

END.....Resolution of the problem

Some Examples Of Dramatic Plot Structure:

Beginning

Joe wants to go to the dance but has no clothes.(intention)
Bill talks him into borrowing clothes from the rich kid who wants to play on their volleyball team.

Middle

Sue asks Joe for a date...He says yes before asking the rich kid.
Rich kid turns him down...since he is just being exploited.

Ending

Joe helps out rich kid later...Rich kid agrees to make him a loan.

Beginning

Betty goes to the teacher about a knee injury, need bandage (intention).

Middle

While bandaging the teacher discovers all kinds of bruises on her body.
In the past, Betty has shared her fantasies and fears. Suddenly she is afraid to share the story of abuse with the teacher.
While the teacher is asking about the bruises, she discovers a story of physical abuse.

Ending

Teacher agrees not to probe. Will not ask questions if she sees the nurse and lets her handle it.

Beginning

Kerry is severely handicapped. Her neighbor is Kim.
Kim's friends tease Kerry and plan to set her up by sending her in the wrong bathroom.(Intention-) Kim has been wanting to be accepted by the group for a long time.

Middle

The group will let Kim come to the next record-television part if she becomes the lead in the con game.

Ending

Kim decides her babysitting job next door is more important. She decides that the respect of Kerry's parents has meaning to her. She uses the babysitting job as an excuse for not doing the deed.

Encourage your students to write about people relationships. Encourage them to write about their own life experiences.

To help new writers get started use the following outline. This establishes the main conflict, character and setting. The previously stated principles and examples are given for the instructor's benefit. A writer need not use them consciously in order to write. Most of my students have written without the benefit of any exercises. However, some pre-planning will help produce better skits if they follow the guides on the worksheet: My Play Plan Sheet.

In using this worksheet it is best to begin by analyzing scripts that the students are familiar with. Begin with skits they have produced themselves. This gets them used to the terminology. You can illustrate the principles as you analyze the skits.Then have the student's apply it to their own plans for writing. Or use the worksheet to analyze a piece of writing. Use it as a checklist to insure the writing is complete, with characterization and dramatic conflict.

A sample student script follows the worksheet.

MY PLAY PLAN SHEET STUDENT_____

PLOTTING THE SCENE--DRAMATIC CONFLICT

1) NAME THE MAIN CHARACTERS

2) DESCRIBE WHAT THIS CHARACTER WANTS TO DO. WHAT IS THIS CHARACTER'S GOAL?

3) DESCRIBE WHAT OR WHO IS KEEPING THIS CHARACTER FROM GETTING TO THE GOAL:

4) WHAT DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER DO FIRST TO GET TO THE GOAL?

(Optional on the back) DESCRIBE HOW THIS MAKES THE PROBLEM MORE COMPLICATED

5) LIST WHAT WILL BE TRIED NEXT, NEXT, NEXT...Etc.
(One attempt constitutes a single conflict/ skit...several a longer scene.)

6) HOW DOES THE PROBLEM GET SOLVED OR DELAYED OR CHANGED?

CHARACTERS & CHARACTERIZATION...& SCENE

A) WHO HELPS THE MAIN CHARACTER?

B) WHAT IS SOMETHING FUNNY THE MAIN CHARACTER SAYS?

C) WHAT IS SOMETHING TYPICAL OUR MAIN CHARACTER MIGHT SAY, A SAYING:

WHAT IS SOMETHING TYPICAL HIS/HER MAIN OPPONENT MIGHT SAY:

D) DESCRIBE WHERE ALL THIS TAKES PLACE

E) WHAT TYPICAL CLOTHES OR GESTURES DO YOUR MAIN CHARACTERS USE?

SAMPLE STUDENT SCRIPT

This playscript was developed at the conclusion of several weeks of theatre games, improvisations and some short script work. Students decided that they wanted to create scripts. They began with rough ideas, read them out loud and got feedback from the instructor.

After re-writing they were typed up. The students enjoyed seeing their names on scripts and viewing the subsequent performance of their works. At the same time they were developing improved discipline towards writing and expressing themselves through the planning-writing-rewriting process.

The original authors were two high school seniors enrolled in my Special Education values class. They both had mild learning disabilities. Neither young lady had ever written a script before. They both had acted in Janus Book Publisher scripts. The narrator role keeps the play short while covering different scenes. This sample is adapted from their original work.

THE CLASSROOM SCENE

CHARACTERS:
NARRATOR
MRS TOBY--HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER
KIM--HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
"JAWS"(JOCELYN)--KIM'S GIRL FRIEND

SETTING:
THE BELL HAS JUST RUNG. KIM ENTERS THE CLASSROOM LATE.
MRS. TOBY IS SEATED AT HER DESK. "JAWS" IS IN HER SEAT.

SCENE 1:

NARRATOR:
Kim comes to class tardy. It is her 5th tardy this month. Mrs. Toby, her teacher, has warned Kim before...Her friend Jocelyn...Jaws- for short...is sitting nearby.

MRS. TOBY:
Kim, where is your note? Is this your 5th time?

(SHE WINKS AT JAWS AS SHE SITS DOWN NEXT TO HER)

KIM:
Hey Jaws...What ya been up to?

(KIM IGNORES MRS. TOBY'S QUESTION)

JAWS:
Did you get those notes finished in calligraphy?

KIM:
Yeah...I'll show you the rest later--

MRS. TOBY:
Kim, I'd pay a little closer attention if I had missed 5 days. Now go get a note from the office!

KIM:
I wasn't late MRS. TOBY. The bell didn't ring out in P.E.

MRS. TOBY:
The bell never rings in your classes does it KIM? If you cannot turn in a note this time I will have to report you as truant.

KIM:
Okay...okay MRS. TOBY, I'll go get a note right away...You'll see...

(KIM looks at JAWS with a nod, then exits. MRS. TOBY takes roll, begins lesson)

SCENE 2

NARRATOR:
KIM returns with a note. She is only gone a short time.

MRS. TOBY:
Back so soon? If only you could be that fast between classes...

KIM:
The secretary and I are good friends.

(Hands MRS. TOBY the note)

MRS. TOBY:
My, my this note is very impressive Kim...It's so pretty. I never knew the secretary could write in calligraphy...

KIM:
After all the times she calls home, we're all good friends.

(KIM and JAWS laugh)

Beside, I let her use my pen--since she lost hers.

MRS. TOBY:
I only get typewritten notes from the secretary.

JAWS: *(Whispering to MRS. TOBY)*
I could use one of those notes for math, next period

KIM:

Sh-h-h.I only have one left--

MRS. TOBY:

What was that?...Anymore what?

KIM:

Now you've done it...

MRS. TOBY:

Uh-huh!...Maybe you could get a note for me too. I really don't feel like teaching this afternoon...And I do have some shopping to do, and the house needs cleaning--

KIM:

Okay...okay, you win MRS. TOBY. I'm always late...Everybody hassles me about it..."Get me a note" ..."I saw you in the hall" ..."What time is it?"....

I lost my babysitting job last week and my mom grounded me. I was just trying to get out from under all these hassles. I'm sorry I forged the note...but I knew she wouldn't write me one...

MRS. TOBY: *(laughing to herself)*

Darn! I was all ready planning to go home early with one of your special calligraphy projects...I thought I could turn it in to the principal.

KIM:

I won't do it again MRS. TOBY...I'll start wearing my watch more often.

MRS. TOBY:

It was a great attempt. We've all done things like that KIM. We'll talk about an appropriate punishment. Maybe I'll make you write it up as a skit. Sit down now and turn to page 145. ....Next time it's an automatic truancy...Now on page 145 we have the assignment for writing our skits. You must begin by--

(scene fades out)

THE END

PROGRAM PLANNING TIPS

INTRODUCTION

There are 3 general options for planning to use dramatic activities in a classroom or training event. The first is a STAND ALONE program. In this instance you create a separate class or program built entirely around those aspects of theatre games, improvisation, scriptwork and performance you wish to cover. This text is sequenced to take you through a STAND ALONE type program.

The other approach is INFUSION into an existing program. In this instance you can develop mini-units of 1-3 weeks in length that become part of another training or class sequence. For example, you might incorporate dramatic activities into areas dealing with Written Language, English, Social Studies, Survival Skills, Social Skills Training, Job Finding, Recreation and Leisure Education.

PLANNING FOR TIME

Avoid prolonged and concentrated practice or rehearsal sessions. It is best to mix theatre games, with scripts and written work. I typically suggest that one go no longer than a 4-6 week unit.

When planning your lessons/activities consider that it takes 5-8 minutes per theatre game in a small group of students (8-12) when the game is done as a group. This depends on how much discussion you have. When it is a game or activity where people individually perform, then I allow 1 minute per person plus 5 minutes. Improvisations will follow a similar length. Beginning scripts should be simple and take no more than 1 week to production. Later "productions" can be extended once enthusiasm is earned.

If you are videotaping this usually takes a minimum of 2-3 days. This includes taping, possible retaping and viewing.

RECRUITING AND ORIENTING STUDENTS

Establish the goals for your group and the type of students you will want. Be sure to consider rules that cover discipline, bathroom breaks, attendance, performance and group interaction. This has been previously discussed.

On the following page you will find a sample program that was developed for Maple Lane School. This is an institution serving incarcerated youth.

CRITERIA USED IN IDENTIFYING INTERESTED STUDENTS

Refer students who meet some of the criteria in each of the 3 groups below. A student who:

1) Is given some orientation to the nature of the class, and expresses some interest or curiosity before enrolling.

2) Is chosen for some of the following traits:
- can work in a group...possibly enjoys helping others
- can be tactful or show empathy for others
- can use their time wisely when not supervised
- can comprehend and follow oral directions
- shows an interest in acting, performing or music

3) Is someone who enjoys using their imagination, for example:
- keeps a diary or log, photo album, likes to draw
- writes stories or poetry, or tells jokes, animated talker
- takes special interest in clothes and appearance or room decoration
- enjoys daydreaming or gives great excuses for being tardy, etc.

NOTE These are general guidelines. No one met all these criteria. Some, in fact, were working towards these criteria as personal goals.

STUDENT ORIENTATION/PREVIEW OUTLINE... PRIOR TO SIGN UP

1) Show a videotape of previous student performances.

2) Show scripts you will use....act one out with another adult.

3) Do 1-3 sure fire theatre games...**YOU** enjoy doing.

4) Establish rules.....such as:
- people must come to every session....otherwise_____
- no one is enrolled after the class has begun since it is a group process
- everyone who attends must attempt all the exercises in the class
- "put-downs" will not be tolerated, but they will be asked to coach others
- people doing a good job or showing special kindness towards others can expect a letter will be sent home or put in their file
- we will videotape or present our final product before others
- everyone receives suggestions for improvement from the director, accepting criticism is part of dramatic practice...for everyone, your suggestions also welcomed
- bathroom breaks
- visitors must participate
- grading criteria

DEVELOP AN AGENDA FOR YOUR PROGRAM

The following agenda was for an after-school class which met voluntarily for 2 days a week. It was taught at a state school/institution for juvenile offenders. It was team taught with a reading instructor who worked with scripts in her reading classes. Perhap, other programs could be longer

Week 1-Orientation: rules, overview, beginning theatre games

Week 2-Theatre Games

Week 3-Theatre Games and beginning non-verbal improvisations

Week 4-Script Orientation & Reading -Janus Publications

Week 5-Verbal improvisation exercises

Week 6- Rehearsal Improvisation and Movement added to scripts

Week 7- Dress rehearsal for scripts... props, exits and entrances

Week 8- Performance and course evaluation

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TEACHING IS DRAMATIC WORKSHOPS

The author contracts with agencies and individuals for workshops lasting 1-3 days. These workshops are "hands-on" experiences. Staff will participate in various games, improvisational activities, and script writing exercises. Technical assistance is also provided for Program Planning, Design and Implementation.

Address inquires to Martin Kimeldorf c/o of the publisher: Ednick Communications Inc.

APPENDICES

INTRODUCTION

The materials in this section illustrate the great variety of application associated with dramatic activities. Kathy Carey describes in the first essay "THE ENTHUSIASM IS ELEMENTARY" how she applies theatre games to a variety of activities. These include creative writing, science, social studies and personal development of her elementary school children. Then Sally Dahl in her essay "THE KEY IS.....EXTEND" describes how she extends and builds upon the lessons found in this book in her junior high school class.

In "I DID SOMETHING RIGHT" a shy, special education high school student describes how he learned to become more confident by being in a skit. This is followed by a teacher making a similar observation of her deaf high school student. In her essay "A STUDENT PERFORMS, NOT JUST ON STAGE" Susan Hopkins chronicles the changes her student goes through as she becomes involved in a community theatre production.

The essay "DRAMA AS A TOOL IN VOCATIONAL COUNSELING" shows how the "learning by becoming others" empathic route my be useful in vocational counseling. Related to this are materials excerpted from JOB SEARCH EDUCATION.

The pages from JOB SEARCH EDUCATION illustrate scripts used by job seekers in setting up appointments where the employer is interviewed *by* the job seeker. In this way, job seekers learn about employers' expectations, which helps them later in writing resumes and preparing for interviews.

First the student is given an annotated script that illustrates the steps of the call with commentary, directions and sample dialogue ("IN-PERSON SURVEY SCRIPT"). This is followed by a script with blanks so the job seeker can personalize the phone call ("MY OWN APPOINTMENT SCRIPT").

Finally, job seekers learn to master this phone script using "INFORMATION SURVEY PRACTICE FORM". This form guides the role plays of the personalized phone script. Like the theatre games and improvisations, the Practice Form requires that students first define the Where and Who for the role playing of an employer phone contact. Situations are then defined (Employer is out, is in, is busy, etc). This is followed by a check off list to insure the student phoning the employer covers all the proper steps in making a business like call.

All these samples show the unlimited environments and programs that can benefit from recreational dramatic activities. One does not have to be a thespian to apply them. Certainly, those with drama backgrounds will see another range, or "stage" of applications feasible. I have done several training workshops for teachers, counselors and employers on many different topics. In the last 3 years, I have included theatre games as a group warm up activity in every workshop I present.

Write and let me know what new uses you have come up with. Let me know about new games or activities you have created. Perhaps they can be included in the next edition.

THE ENTHUSIASM IS ELEMENTARY

Three anxious hands shot into the air. "You forgot to write 'Words*Words*Words' on the board." Jason never failed if I was one step behind in our creative writing class. Previously Jason was a noncontributing member encased in a shell of low self-esteem. Ever since we prefaced our writing assignments with dramatic activities, Jason has moved from withdrawal to participating and finally advocating the lesson.

The lights switched off one by one as I asked these curious students to close their eyes and think of the first word that came to mind when I said "bear." "Words*Words*Words is the name of the game," I quipped with the skill of a barker. "Come one, come all. Become the bear of your dreams." I told them that since this was the first time, they could repeat others' answers, but they *must* respond.

"Grizzly, cuddly, hybernating," I began with a growl. Up and down the rows we continued until we had at least 20 different words associated with bears. The lights came back on, kids opened their creative writing spirals and were instructed to quickly jot down descriptive bear words for one minute.

The bell rang and day two began with a review of 'Words*Words*Words' rules. This time I asked them to write two-word descriptions (lumbering grizzly, bristly fur, stinky feet, frightful growl) in 5 minutes.

"Stop! Now choose your favorite phrase and say it out loud.If you hear a new phrase you like, then add it to your list." Phrases clearly spewed forth. The pride in their eyes lit up the room.

"You are a logger in the forest looking up to the sky. How do you feel today? What are you wearing? Colorful, tattered, drab? How does the air feel? Damp, fresh? Anything dead, alive to your left, right? Sounds of silence? Sounds of other workers? Any food in your pocket? Any burdensome tools on your belt? When I say 'go' your mission is to write as many sentences, phrases, or just words as you can in ten minutes related to this scene. If you draw a blank you may write anything you choose, but try to get back on task."

What once was previously looked upon as a writing chore was now eagerly anticipated by most students. They were now willing to write on just about any topic: things that are twisted, things that are sad, things loggers wear, tender things. They had each developed a personal thesaurus. By sharing our best phrases we had uncovered a powerful reinforcement which later enabled my students to attempt entire passages.Now we're working on novels. Their enthusiasm infected me and I began to consider other applications.

I expanded the topics to include subject matter from health, science, and social studies. Writing fast and furiously encouraged them to trace vivid descriptions of blood circulating through their bodies, rocks changing in their cycles, and Greeks practicing for the Olympic games.

I am using this word association process to test recall of facts. In this way I have an alternative to short written quizzes. It can also be used as a review process for the final tests.

"*Words*Words*Words" was only the beginning. "Speedy Tongue" gave us the skills to enunciate and project in class. Why speak if we can't be understood in our echoing classrooms? "Slo-Mo Tongue" was added to encourage the nervous speaker to feel the impact of variation on the listener. "Mirror" convinced us that there are different ways to brush our teeth than our own. "Body Warm-ups" exposed Jason to more acceptable ways to line up than as a left tackle. "Sound Machine" adapted to "jungle sounds" or "sea sounds" takes us all on a fantasy trip refreshing to any group needing a "daily vacation."

My students have been exposed to more environments and experiences than they'll ever visit in a lifetime by sharing these experiences.I am convinced that the techniques and procedures suggested in *Teaching is Dramatic* is a major key to providing the transition from knowledge to application and productivity.

Kathleen L. Carey

Centralia School Dist.,Centralia, WA

THE KEY IS...EXTEND

Jim opened the door of the space module, exited, and began his walk. Suddenly, his air hose caught on the latch and ripped free. Twirling in space, he grasped for his precious lifeline, his face contorted in agony.

Then Judy free-floated out, her face curious and lit with pleasure as she reached for twinkling stars and passing meteorites.

"What about Jim?" a voice whispered. "He's about had it."

Judy turned in slow motion, registered surprise and sympathy, gracefully floated toward Jim, and secured his lifeline just as he was about to gasp his last breath.

If this reminds you of the 'Group Game' called "Pinwheel" in *Teaching Is Dramatic* you have grasped an important aspect of this text--Extension--to fit the group and individuals you are working with. Jim, Judy and two other eighth grade students were brought to the front of the room. "You're the passengers on the latest spaceflight about to take your first spacewalk. Who wants to go first?" With that, a stimulating dramatic game began.

As a beginning dramatics teacher, you may not feel comfortable extending the exercises at first. An excellent starting activbity is "Walks because of it's specific suggestions and definite focus. (For game rules see section "Program Step 1: Theatre Games, Body Warm-Ups"). Hesitant students can work in pairs or small groups where it is comfortable to participate. We lined up five students on one side of the room to cross the "magic field." Soon someone was asking, "Let me try that one," or "How about crossing a dance floor, hoping to get asked?" As students suggest extensions, write them down! Walks has now grown into a marathon...

Obviously, the benefits of dramatics games are many. Faces light up with excitement, leadership qualities pop out, shy students lose their fear, imagination is stimulated, plus 'class clown' gets a chance to perform at an appropriate time. Besides the inherent value to the student, you've a whole ream of 'sponge activities." What teacher hasn't had 5-10 unplanned minutes?

Put the activities down on cards and let a student choose one to direct while you take roll and get organized. Extend a writing lesson in geography by having students walk across an African dessert, while imitating an animal you have studied. In history my students regularly cross the Concord Bridge and start the "shot heard 'round the world." Drab lessons come to live, and seatwork is broken up with exciting interludes, seasoned with warmth and laughter.

"I have my favorite pet here," I told a group of four, cuddling and scratching the ears of my kitten. "Here Kerry."

Kerry, one of the more creative eight graders, crooned to it, gently tucked in it's fluffy tail and passed it to Alecia and then to Mary, the two shyer performers who followed her lead.

Last, the class clown, Bill, grabbed the cat by the neck, shook it with glee and tossed it aside to the hilarity of the group.

"Kerry, do you have a pet?"

She did....a worm which she treated with concentrated curiosity. Debbied squealed and handled it hesitantly; Mary refused it, showing obvious distaste on her face, Bill ate it and burped.

Next came the skunk. The girls wrinkled their nostes and pushed it away with a "Gross...Yuk..." Bill wrapped it around his neck, stroking it lovingly. The Boa capped it off. Kerry struggled with its weight and awkward shape. Alecia wrestled it's head and shoved it at Mary who immediately screamed and ran to her seat. Bill finally got his retribution. The Boa floored and strangled him with a deathlike grip...to everyone's surprise (especially Cory's).

In "My Favoarit Pet" ('Physicalizing') each student became wholly involved in the activity. Shy students are not intimidated by a focussed activity. The suggestions and examples provided for each game allow everyone to make a contribution. The class left the room smiling. It took five minutes to end the day that way.

Sally Dahl

Centralia Junior High

Centralia, Washington

"I DID SOMETHING RIGHT"

INTRODUCTION

This essay was written at the conclusion of a 2 1/2 week drama experience in a special education Written Language course. The class experience included 2 days of theatre games followed by work on a multiple scene skit*. When working on the skit we used written assignments** (about characters and plot development) to break up the rehearsals routine. Our skit practice included cold readings, rehearsal, in-class performance (for another visiting class), plus videotaping. At the conclusion, students were asked to reflect upon their experience.

The following essay is by a high school student who is quite shy. He had never before done any performing. The following are his words verbatim. The essay has been edited for punctuation and grammar.

STUDENT ESSAY

At the beginning I didn't like the idea of having a play. I would have rather done my everyday work. I also didn't want a part because I wasn't interested in doing a play that I didn't know anything about. It became more amusing as time went on.

When it came time for the play I was ready. On Friday I thought I was ready, but it turned out we had last minute changes just before the performance. My role got changed as a narrator. Then we had our roles changed again. I ended up with three scenes instead of one. I read them over a few times. Then, when it came to my time to read it, I did all right. It turned out better than I thought.

Today I kind of like the idea of doing a play. For one reason, I look back and see that I'm plenty able enough to speak in front of a group. I found that out because I also had to do an oral report in World History class. And, another reason would be that I did something right, that the teachers talked me into.

*The play was "Too Pretty" by Julie Nieve from *Read* Magazine.

**The sample worksheet on page 46 could be used with this play.

A STUDENT PERFORMS - NOT JUST ON THE STAGE

Recently a very talented and enthusiatic man, Rod Lathim, and his co-director, Mike Barnes visited my class of junior high school hearing impaired students to tell them about an exciting opportunity to be in a play with the Theatre of the Handicapped.* Most of the students never having been exposed to anything like this before, quietly listened and then forgot about it.

One student, however, a profoundly deaf fifteen year old girl was extremely excited and eager to participate. As she began to pour a tremendous amount of energy into rehearsals, I was amazed to watch her whole personality growing. She became more mature and serious about her school work. It was as if everything that affected her life was important now. We even used her parts in the play as a learning experience in the classroom, discussing work meanings, and pointing out that in some songs the last word in every other line sounds the same.

As her confidence in her performing grew, her confidence in herself as an individual became stronger and stronger. By the time opening night arrived she was like a different person. On the stage she performed beautiful songs in sign language with the ease of an experienced actress. The play is over now and yet she has remained a secure individual, confident in her ability to succeed. In addition, all of my other students are so sorry that they did not participate in the play. They are all hoping that Rod and Mike will write another play so they can be in it. This experience has been invaluable for my student, and I sincerely hope that more of my students will have a chance to be part of something like this in the future.

by Susan W. Hopkins

(Susan Hopkins is a teacher for the Hearing Impaired in Santa Barbara.)

*Now called Access Theatre.

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DRAMA AS A TOOL IN VOCATIONAL COUNSELING

I see the role drama could play in a vocational counseling process as very similar to the function that role playing or psychodrama serves in the psychotherapeutic process. Role playing becomes a vehicle where those in treatment can "don the robe" of others. In this way one can learn about and examine their own unique role, life experience, social position, attitudes, feelings.

Looking at vocational counseling as perhaps the process of assisting people in making vocational or career decision, I am struck with the observation that this is truly a discovery or educational process. I further see drama as a means to learn about work habits or specific jobs before the client is placed on a bonafide job. It would seem that the process one would go through to prepare for a characterization for drama would demand the use of imagination, current knowledge, and perhaps some research. I feel this could be very effectively used in a vocational setting.

The most common problem I confront while counseling is the "I want to be a brain surgeon" syndrome. By this, I mean that often people (when presented with the possibility of actually choosing a career or expressing a preference engage in what could be called "dream oriented wishful thinking." They throw aside practical considerations and opt for a career that may have been an occasional fantasy for them in the past. These seemingly impulsive choices are often difficult or even impossible to shake with realistic information.

In this situation the counselor is faced with the choice of "losing" clients because we do not support their interests or of backing them in their unrealistic choices (and dealing with the sometimes damaging failure that often follows). Drama and theatre could be an alternative. It could provide an opportunity to learn by exercising one's imagination and using on-hand and past knowledge in preparing to perform a convincing portrayal before an audience. Good vocational counseling is, in a large part, imparting needed information to impact a career choice. I feel the example I have used here suggests that drama and theatre should not be overlooked in career education and vocational counseling.

by Pat A. Raines, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

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JOB FINDING SCRIPTS , ROLE PLAYING, AND IMPROVISATION

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WORKSHEET 26: IN-PERSON SURVEY SCRIPT

DIRECTIONS	SAMPLE SCRIPT
1. Tell who you are & why you called	**You:** Hello, my name is Susan Brown. I am trying to get some advice from an expert in the field of Child Care. This is for my career class at Cleveland House.
2. Ask to speak to an expert	May I please speak to someone who can give me expert advice about Child Care Careers? Or can I speak to the person who supervises or trains your Child Care workers?
If the person is not available 1. Ask when to call back 2. Ask who to call for 3. Write this down. You can still use leads from page 38.	**Business:** I'm sorry but the best person to talk to is busy in class. **You:** When would be a good time to call back? **Business:** Try at 11:30. **You:** And who should I ask for? **Business:** Ms. Shriver. **You:** Thank you.
What if they try to avoid you? 1. Ask for the name of the expert 2. Then wait at least 1 hour 3. Call back and ask for the expert by name 4. Don't give details why you are calling	**Business:** Is this about a job? We aren't hiring right now. **You:** This is just for a class assignment. Could someone else help me? **Business:** That would be Ms. Shriver, but she is real busy now. **You:** Thank you. (Second call) **You:** Can I speak to Ms. Shriver? **Business:** May I ask what this is about? **You:** Of course. I'm returning a personal business call. **Business:** Hold on.
3. Tell who you are & why called	**You:** This is Susan Brown from Cleveland House. I am trying to get some advice from an expert about the career of Child Care.
4. Tell them what you want and how long it will take	I would like to know if I could interview you about skills and work habits needed for this job. I am interested in how you got into this field. I have about 25 questions I'd like to ask. It could take about 25 minutes.

continued . . .

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5. Ask for a time

Don't ask if they will meet you. Instead ask which time is best. Have a time and date ready.

Business: Yes, I think I'll have time for that.
You: Would this Thursday be good?
Business: I'd rather do it Wednesday.
You: Could we meet in the afternoon? That's my class time.
Business: Sure.

6. Write it down and repeat time & place

You: Good. Then that will be for Wednesday at 2:00 PM.

7. Ask where to meet the person

Later you can call the secretary or the bus company for exact directions on how to get to the place. Write that information down, too.

You: Where would you like me to meet you?
Business: Why don't you check in at the main entrance and have them page me? It's on your right as you come in.

8. Thank the person

You: Great! I'll look forward to meeting you. Thank you for your time.

SOME ADDITIONAL TIPS

What if the employers say no?

He is too busy....
She doesn't want to....

Business: Gee, it sounds like a really worthwhile project, but I really don't have the time. I'd like to help, but I'm sorry....

Ask for a lead

–Write down any leads.
Call these people next.

You: Could you recommend someone else who might be interested in giving me advice?

Business: You might try Tot's Loveland.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR SCHEDULE?

Before calling, sit down with your instructor and plan the times you will have free to visit. This may depend on lots of things. Create a small calendar for the week with times and days you can meet. When you get an appointment, write these in.

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WORKSHEET 27: MY OWN APPOINTMENT SCRIPT

You will need a calendar or dates when you will be free & a pencil.

DIRECTIONS	YOUR SCRIPT
1) Tell who you are and why you called	Hello. My name is: _____. I am trying to get some advice from an expert in the field of: _____ This is for my: _____ career class.
2) Ask to speak to an expert	Could I please speak to an expert, maybe the person who supervises or trains your: _____ _____ workers?

Try to get the expert's name

If not available	When would be a good time to call back? And who should I ask for?
If they try to avoid you	This is just for a class assignment. Could someone else help me?
Call back later Ask for the person by name Tell them you are returning the call	Hello. Could I please speak to: (employer's name)? I am returning a personal business call. This is _____ from _____

3) When you get through to the expert

1. Tell who you are
2. What you want
3. How long it will take

Hello. This is _____. I am trying to get some advice from an expert in the field of:

_____.

This is for my career assignment at:

_____.

I would be interested in interviewing you with about _____ questions. I would like to find out why you chose this field and listen to any advice you might have.

*I would like to come with _____ Teacher _____ Other Students. (optional)

continued . . .

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WORKSHEET 28: INFORMATION SURVEY SCRIPT PRACTICE FORM

You will role play this again. Fill out the information below.

The job seeker information (You)

Job Seeker: _____

Type of work interested in:

_____

When you can meet with employers:

Time Date

_____

_____

_____

The business information (Your friend)

Receptionist & later the boss is:

_____

Name of the place calling:

_____

Name of the boss is:

_____

Roleplay each of the following situations and mark each box on the following page with:

\+ means "did this step"
– means "left this step out"

Situation 1. The receptionist connects you with the boss, who gives you an appointment.

Situation 2. The receptionist tells you the boss is out. Get information and call back.

Situation 3. They try to avoid you. Call back.

Situation 4. They tell you "no." You ask for a lead and get it.

Situation 5. The receptionist tells you the boss is out. You call back and get the boss directly instead of the receptionist. The boss gives you an appointment.

Situation 6. Have the teacher pick one of the first five situations and mark you off.

continued . . .

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STEPS	SITUATION 1	SITUATION 2	SITUATION 3	SITUATION 4	SITUATION 5	SITUATION 6
1. Tell who you are and why you called						
2. Ask to speak to an expert						
If the person is not there get name and time to call back . . . write this down						
If they try to avoid you get the name and call back						
On callback, ask for the person by name—personal business						
3. When you get the boss, repeat who you are & why you called						
4. Tell what you want: —and how long the interview will take						
If they say "no" ask for a lead						
5. Ask for a time & date						
Repeat the time & day						
6. Ask where to meet						
7. Thank the person						